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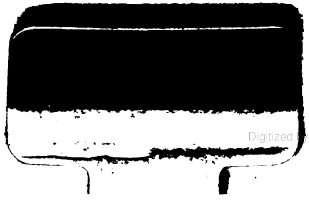

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## TO THE STUDENT

MY PUPILS have often asked me for a volume of convenient size containing models of English style. This book is printed in response to this request, and contains selections from a number of authors who have stood the test of time. Each extract should be studied in turn, special words or phrases underscored, and notes freely made by way of comment or criticism. The book is made to fit the pocket, so that its contents may the more readily be made to fit the head.

GRENVILLE KLEISER.

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# MODELS FOR STUDY

## ON EXCELLENCE IN STYLE

BY ARISTOTLE

Let excellence of style be defined to consist in its being clear (a sign of this is this, that the diction, unless it make the sentiment clear, will not affect its purpose); and neither low, nor above the dignity of the subject, but in good taste; for the style of poetry, indeed, is not low, yet it is not becoming in prose.

Of nouns and verbs, those which are in general use produce the effect of clearness; to prevent its being low, and to give it ornament, there are other nouns which have been mentioned in the "Poetics," for a departure [from ordinary acceptations] causes it to appear more dignified; for men are affected in respect of style in the very same way as they are toward foreigners and citizens. On which account you should give your phrase a foreign air; for men are admirers of things out of the way, and what is an object of admiration is pleasant. Now in the case of metrical compositions, there are many things which produce this effect, and they are very becoming, because both the subject and the person stand more apart [from ordinary


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life]; in prose, however, these helps are much fewer, for the subject is less exalted: since even in that art were a slave, or a mere youth, or [any one, in fact, in speaking] of mere trifles to express himself in terms of studied ornament, it would be rather unbecoming; but there, too [as in poetry], the rule of good taste is that your style be lowered or raised according to the subject. On which account we must escape observation in doing this, and not appear to speak in a studied manner, but naturally, for the one is of a tendency to persuade, the other is the very reverse; because people put themselves on their guard, as tho against one who has a design upon them, just as they would against adulterated wine. [Let your style, then, be such] as was the case with the voice of Theodorus as compared with that of the other actors; for it appeared to be that of the character which was speaking, theirs, however, were foreign from the character. And the deceit is neatly passed off if one frame his nomenclature upon a selection from ordinary conversation; the thing which Euripides does, and first gave the hint of.

As, however, nouns and verbs are [the materials] of which the speech is made up, and as nouns admit so many species as have been examined in the "Poetics," out of the number of these we must employ but sparingly, and in very few places, exotic and compound words, and those newly coined; where they


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may be employed I will state hereafter: the reason [of the restriction] has been mentioned, viz., because they remove your style [from that of common life] more than is consistent with good taste. Words, however, of ordinary use, and in their original acceptations and metaphors, are alone available in the style of prose: a proof [that this is the fact is] that these are the only words which all persons employ; for everybody carries on conversation by means of metaphor, and words in their primary sense, and those of ordinary use. Thus, it is plain that if one should have constructed his style well, it will be both of a foreign character, and that [the art of the orator] may still elude observation, and [the style itself] will have the advantage of clearness; this, however, was laid down to be the perfection of rhetorical language. But of all nouns, those which are equivocal suit the purposes of the sophist, for by their help he effects his fallacies, while synonyms are of use to the poet.

The nature, then, of each of these varieties, and how many species of metaphor there are, and also that this ornament is of the greatest effect, as well in poetry as prose, has been explained (as I have observed above), in the "Poetics." In prose, however, we should bestow the greater attention on them, in proportion as an oration has to be made up of fewer adjustments than a metrical composition.



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Moreover, the metaphor possesses in an especial manner [the beauties of] clearness and sweetness, with an air of being foreign; and it is not possible to derive it from any other person.

You must, however, apply, in the case both of epithets and metaphors, such as are appropriate; and this will depend on their being constructed on principles of analogy, otherwise they will be sure to appear in bad taste; because contraries show themselves to be such, particularly when set by each other. But you must consider, as a purple garment becomes a youth, what is equally so to an old man; since the same garment does not become [both].

And if you wish to embellish your subject, see you deduce your metaphor from such things coming under the same class as are better; and if to cry it down, from such as are worse: I mean, as the cases are opposed and come under the same genus, that the saying, for example, of a beggar, that "he prays," and of one who is praying, that "he begs" (both being species of asking), is to do the thing which has been mentioned; just as Iphicrates called Callias "a mere collector to the goddess, and not a bearer of the torch." He, however, replied, "that he must needs be uninitiated himself, or he would not call him a collector, but a bearer of the torch." For these are both services connected with the goddess; the one, however, is



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respectable, while the other is held in no repute. And some one [speaks of the courtiers of Dionysius as] Dionysian parasites; they, however, call themselves artificers. And these expressions are both metaphors; the one of persons who would depreciate, the other the contrary. Even robbers, nowadays, call themselves purveyors. On which principle we may say of a man who "has acted unjustly," that he "is in error"; and of one who "is in error," that he "has acted unjustly." Again, of one who has stolen, both that has taken [in way of diminution], and that has ravaged [in exaggeration]. But the saying, as the Telephus of Euripides does, "that he lords it o'er the oars, and landing in Mysia," etc., is out of taste; for the expression, "lording it o'er," is above the dignity of the subject; [the rhetorical artifice] then, is not palmed off. There will also be a fault in the syllables, unless they are significant of a grateful sound; for instance, Dionysius, surnamed Chalcous, in his elegies, calls poetry, "the clangor of Caliope," because both are vocal sounds; the metaphor, however, is a paltry one, and couched in uncouth expressions.

Again, our metaphors should not be far-fetched; but we should make the transfer, on the principle of assigning names out of the number of kindred objects, and such as are the same species, to objects which are unnamed, of which, however, it is clear, simul-



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taneously with their being uttered, that they are akin, as in that approved enigma,

> A man I once beheld [and wondering view'd]
> Who, on another, brass with fire had glued.
> TWINING

for the operation is undesignated by any name, and both are species of attaching; wherefore the writer called the application of the cupping instrument a gluing. And, generally speaking, it is possible out of neatly constructed enigmas to extract excellent metaphors; because it is on the principles of metaphor that men construct enigmas; so that it is evident that [if the enigma be a good one] the metaphor has been properly borrowed.

The transfer also should be made from objects which are beautiful; beauty, however, of words consists, as Licymnius observes, in the sound or in the idea conveyed; as does also their inelegance. And there is, moreover, a third, which does away the sophistical doctrine; since it is of the fact, as Bryso argues, "that no one speaks inelegantly, if, indeed, the using one expression instead of another carries with it the same meaning": for this is a fallacy; because some words are nearer in their ordinary acceptations, more assimilated, and have more peculiar force of setting the object before the eyes than others. And what is more, one word represents the object under different circumstances from another;



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so that we may even on this principle lay it down that one word has more or less of beauty and inelegance than another; for altho both words [at the same time] express [properties which are] beautiful, as well as such as are inelegant; yet they either express them not *qua* they are beautiful, or not *qua* they are inelegant; or granting they do, yet they express them, the one in a greater, the other in a less degree. But we are to deduce our metaphors from these sources—from such as are beautiful either in sound, in meaning, or [in the image they present] to the sight, or any other sense. And there is a difference, in the saying, for instance, "the rosy-fingered Aurora," rather than "the purple-fingered," or, what is still worse, "the crimson-fingered."

Also, in the case of epithets, it is very possible to derive one's epithets from a degrading or disgraceful view of the case; for instance, "the murderer of his mother"; and we may derive them from a view on the better side, as, "the avenger of his father." And Simonides, when the victor in a race by mules offered him a trifling present, was not disposed to write, as tho feeling hurt at writing on demiasses; when, however, he offered a sufficient present, he composed the poem:

> **Hail! Daughters of the generous Horse,**
> **That skim, like wind, along the course, etc.**
>
> HARRIS

and yet they were daughters of asses as well.



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Again, it is possible to express the selfsame thing diminutively. And it is the employment of diminutives which renders both good and evil less; just as Aristophanes jests in "The Babylonians"; using, instead of gold, "a tiny piece of gold"; instead of "a garment," "a little garment"; instead of "reproach," "puny reproach"; and instead of "sickness," "slight indisposition." We ought, however, to be careful, and always keep to the mean in both cases. . . .

Style will possess the quality of being in good taste if it be expressive at once of feeling and character, and in proportion to the subject-matter. This proposition, however, is preserved, provided the style be neither careless on questions of dignity, nor dignified on such as are mean: neither to a mean word let ornament be superadded; otherwise it appears mere burlesque. . . . .

But [the style] expressive of feeling, supposing the case be one of assault, is the style of a man in a passion; if, however, it be one of loathsomeness and painful caution; if, however, the case demand praise, with exultation; if pity, with submission; and so on in the other cases. And a style which is appropriate, moreover, invests the subject with persuasive efficacy. For the mind is cheated into a persuasion that the orator is speaking with sincerity, because under such circumstances men stand affected in that manner. So that


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people suppose things to be even as the speaker states them, what tho, in reality, they are not; and the hearer has a kindred feeling with the orator, who expresses himself feelingly, even should he say nothing to the purpose; availing themselves of which, may bear down their hearers in the storm of passion.

## OLD CHINA

BY CHARLES LAMB

I have an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture-gallery. I can not defend the order of preference, but by saying that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play and the first exhibition that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that, under the notion of men and women, float about uncircumbscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china teacup.

I like to see my old friends—whom distance

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can not diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, had made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off. See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on teacups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in a midst of a flowery mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pagodas, dancing the hays.

Here—a cow and a rabbit couchant, and coextensive—so objects show, seem through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay.

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old-fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a



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recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favorable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to overshade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state"—so she was pleased to ramble on—"in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, oh, how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!)—we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

"Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so threadbare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent



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Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedward) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating,* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical—give you half the honest vanity with which you flaunted it about in that overworn suit—your old corbeau—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings, was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now.

"When you came home with twenty apologies



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for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Leonardo, which we christened the 'Lady Blanch'; when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Leonardos. Yet do you?

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holiday—holidays and all other fun are gone now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savory cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noontide for some decent house, where we might go in and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a tablecloth—and wish for such another honest hostess as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now, when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom; moreover, we *ride* part of the way, and go into a fine inn,



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and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage and a precarious welcome.

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw the 'Battle of Hexham,' and the 'Surrender of Calais,' and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in the 'Children in the Wood'—when we squeezed out our shillings apiece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and, more strongly, I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame; and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I


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appeal to you whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in, indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough—but there was still a law of civility to woman recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat and the play, afterward! Now we can only pay our money and walk in. You can not see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard, too, well enough then; but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty.

"There was pleasure in eating strawberries, before they became quite common—in the first dish of peas, while they were yet dear—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means—it would be selfish and wicked. It is the very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people, living together as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like, while each apologizes, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves, in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint



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how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never *do* make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

"I know what you are going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet, and much ado we used to have every thirty-first night of December to account for our exceedings, many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much, or that we had not spent so much, or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future, and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now), we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with 'lusty brimmers' (as you used to quote it out of *hearty, cheerful Mr. Cotton,* as you called him), we used to welcome in the 'coming guest.' Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us."

Bridget is so sparing of her speech on most occasions that when she gets into a rhetorical vein I am careful how I interrupt it. I could



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not help, however, smiling at the fantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor —— hundred pounds a year. "It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superflux into the sea we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances can not straiten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement, indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride where we formerly walked—live better and lie softer—and shall be wise to do so, than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a day; could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young, to see them; could the good old one-shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument by our well-carpeted fireside, sitting on this luxu-



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rious sofa, be once more struggling up those inconvenient staircases, pushed about and squeezed, and elbowed by the poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers; could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours, and the delicious '*Thank God, we are safe,*' which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theater down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Crœsus had, or the great Jew R—— is supposed to have, to purchase it. And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty, insipid half Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house."

## THE TEMPLE PRISON

BY ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

We left Louis XVI at the threshold of the Temple, where Pétion had conducted him, without his being able to know as yet whether he entered there as suspended from the throne or as a prisoner. This uncertainty lasted some days.

The Temple was an ancient and dismal fortress, built by the monastic Order of Templars,


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at the time when sacerdotal and military theocracies, uniting in revolt against princes with tyranny toward the people, constructed for themselves forts for monasteries, and marched to dominion by the double power of the cross and the sword. After their fall their fortified dwelling had remained standing, as a wreck of past times neglected by the present. The château of the Temple was situated near the Faubourg St.-Antoine, not far from the Bastile; it enclosed with its buildings, its palace, its towers, and its gardens, a vast space of solitude and silence, in the center of a most densely populated quarter. The buildings were composed of a *prieuré*, or palace of the Order, the apartments of which served as an occasional dwelling for the Comte d'Artois, when that prince came from Versailles to Paris. This dilapidated palace contained apartments furnished with ancient movables, beds, and linen for the suite of the prince. A porter and his family were its only hosts. A garden surrounded it, as empty and neglected as the palace. At some steps from this dwelling was the donjon of the château, once the fortification of the Temple. Its abrupt, dark mass rose on a simple spot of ground toward the sky; two square towers, the one larger, the other smaller, were united to each other like a mass of walls, each one having at its flank other small suspended towers, in former days crowned with battlements at their extremity,



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and these formed the principal group of this construction. Some low and more modern buildings abutted upon it, and served, by disappearing in its shade, to raise its height. This donjon and tower were constructed of large stones, cut in Paris, the excoriations and cicatrices of which marbled the walls with yellow, livid spots, upon the black ground which the rain and snow incrust upon the large buildings of the north of France. The large tower, almost as high as the towers of a cathedral, was not less than sixty feet from the base to the top. It enclosed within its four walls a space of thirty square feet. An enormous piles of masonry occupied the center of the tower, and rose almost to the point of the edifice. This pile, larger and wider at each story, leaned its arches upon the exterior walls, and formed four successive arched roofs, which contained four guard-rooms. These halls communicated with other hidden and more narrow places cut in the towers. The walls of the edifice were nine feet thick. The embrasures of the few windows which lighted it, very large at the entrance of the hall, sunk, as they became narrow, even to the crosswork of stones, and left only a feeble and remote light to penetrate into the interior. Bars of iron darkened these apartments still further. Two doors, the one of doubled oak-wood very thick, and studded with large diamond-headed nails; the other plated with iron, and fortified



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with bars of the same metal, divided each hall from the stair by which one ascended to it.

This staircase rose in a spiral to the platform of the edifice. Seven successive wickets, or seven solid doors, shut by bolt and key, were ranged from landing to landing, from the base to the terrace. At each one of these wickets a sentinel and a key-bearer were on guard. An exterior gallery crowned the summit of the donjon. One made here ten steps at each turn. The least breath of air howled there like a tempest. The noises of Paris mounted there, weakening as they came. Thence the eye ranged freely over the low roofs of the quarter Saint Antoine, or the streets of the Temple, upon the dome of the Pantheon, upon the towers of the cathedral, upon the roofs of the pavilions of the Tuileries, or upon the green hills of Issy, or of Choisy-le-Roi, descending, with their villages, their parks, and their meadows, toward the course of the Seine.

The small tower stood with its back to the large one. It had also two little towers upon each of its flanks. It was equally square, and divided into four stories. No interior communication existed between these two contiguous edifices; each had its separate staircase; an open platform crowned this tower in place of a roof, as on the donjon. The first story enclosed an antechamber, an eating-hall, and a library of old books collected by the ancient



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priors of the Temple, or serving as a depot for the refuse of the libraries of the Comte d'Artois; the second, third, and fourth stories offered to the eye the same disposition of apartments, the same nakedness of wall, and the same dilapidation of furniture. The winds whistled there, the rain fell across the broken panes, the swallow flew in there at pleasure; no beds, sofas, or hangings were there. One or two couches for the assistant jailers, some broken straw-bottom chairs, and earthen vessels in an abandoned kitchen formed the whole of the furniture. Two low-arched doors, whose freestone moldings represented a bundle of pillars, surmounted by broken escutcheons of the Temple, led to the vestibule of these two towers.

Large alleys paved with flagstones surrounded the building; these were separated by barriers of planks. The garden was overgrown with vegetation—thick with coarse herbs, and choked by heaps of stones and gravel, the relics of demolished buildings. A high and dull wall, like that of a cloister, made the place still more gloomy. This wall had only one outlet, at the extremity of a long alley on the Vieille Ru du Temple.

Such were the exterior aspect and interior disposition of this abode when the owners of the Tuileries, Versailles, and Fontainebleau arrived at nightfall. These deserted halls no longer expected tenants since the Templars



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had left them to go to the funeral pile of Jacques de Molay. These pyramidal towers, empty, cold, and mute for so many ages, more resembled the chambers of a pyramid in the sepulcher of a Pharaoh of the West than a residence.

## TRIAL OF WARREN HASTINGS

BY THOMAS B. MACAULAY

In the meantime the preparations for the trial had proceeded rapidly, and on the thirteenth of February, 1788, the sittings of the Court commenced. There have been spectacles more dazzling to the eye, more gorgeous with jewelry and cloth of gold, more attractive to grown-up children, than that which was then exhibited at Westminster, but, perhaps, there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated, a reflecting, an imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interest which belong to the near and to the distant, to the present and to the past, were collected on one spot, and in one hour. All the talents and all the accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilization were now displayed, with every advantage that could be derived both from cooperation and from contrast. Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backward, through



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many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid or far away, over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky nations living under strange stars, worshiping strange gods, and writing strange characters from right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit, according to forms handed down from the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the lord of the holy city of Benares, and over the ladies of the princely house of Oude.

The place was worthy such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers. The streets were kept clear by cavalry. The peers, robed in gold and ermine, were marshaled by the heralds under Garter King-at-Arms. The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords, three-fourths of the Upper House, as


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the Upper House then was, walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal. The junior baron present led the way, George Elliot, Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defense of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain. The long procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of the realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the King. Last of all came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The gray old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the Queen the fair-haired young daughters of the house of Brunswick. There the ambassadors of great kings and commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the limitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained



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some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen, side by side, the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labors in that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition, a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid. There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There, too, was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race, the Saint Cecilia whose delicate features, lighted up by love and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticized and exchanged repartees, under the rich peacock-hangings of Mrs. Montague. And there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury, shone round Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

The sergeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar and bent his knee. The culprit was, indeed, not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive



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and populous country, and made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory, except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect, a high and intellectual forehead, a brow pensive, but not gloomy, a mouth of inflexible decision, a face pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council, *Mens æqua in arduis:* such was the aspect with which the great pro-consul presented himself to his judges.

His counsel accompanied him, men all of whom were afterward raised by their talents and learning to the highest posts in their profession: the bold and strong-minded Law, afterward Chief Justice of the King's Bench; the more humane and eloquent Dallas, afterward Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; and Plomer who, near twenty years later, successfully conducted in the same high court the defense of Lord Melville, and subsequently became Vice-Chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

But neither the culprit nor his advocates



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attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red drapery a space had been fitted up with green benches, and tables for the Commons. The managers, with Burke at their head, appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox, generally so regardless of appearance, had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a bag and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment; and his commanding, copious and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor; and his friends were left without the help of his excellent sense, his tact, and his urbanity. But, in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides. There was Burke, ignorant, indeed, or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers, but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator, ancient or modern. There, with eyes reverentially fixt on Burke, appeared the finest gentleman of his age, his form de-


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veloped by every manly exercise, his face beaming with intelligence and spirit, the ingenious, the chivalrous, the high-souled Windham. Nor, tho surrounded by such men, did the youngest manager pass unnoticed. At an age when most of those who distinguished themselves in life are still contending for prizes and fellowships at college, he had won for himself a conspicuous place in Parliament. No advantage of fortune or connection was wanting that could set off to the height his splendid talents and his unblemished honor. At twenty-seven he had been thought worthy to be ranked with the veteran statesmen who appeared as the delegates of the British Commons at the bar of the British nobility. All who stood at that bar, save him alone, are gone —culprit, advocate, accusers. To the generation which is now in the vigor of life he is the sole representative of a great age which has passed away. But those who, within the last ten years, have listened with delight, till the morning sun shone on the tapestries of the House of Lords, to the lofty and animated eloquence of Charles Earl Grey, are able to form some estimate of the powers of a race of men among whom he was not the foremost.

The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The ceremony occupied two whole days, and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the



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clerk of the court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges. With an exuberance of thought and a splendor of diction which more than satisfied the highly-raised expectation of the audience, he described the character and institutions of the natives of India, recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated, and set forth the constitution of the company, and of the English presidencies. Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society, as vivid as that which existed in his own mind, he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law. The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stern and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out; smelling-bottles were handed round; hysterical sobs and screams were heard; and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the orator concluded.


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Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, "Therefore," said he, "hath it with all confidence been ordered by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors. I impeach him in the name of the Commons House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honor he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under foot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all!"

## SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

### BY ABRAHAM LINCOLN

FELLOW COUNTRYMEN: At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the



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great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the Gov-


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ernment claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it. Neither party expected for the war the magnitude nor the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, nor even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Wo unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but wo to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the wo due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty



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scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it shall continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in: to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan —to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

## ON STYLE

BY JONATHAN SWIFT

The following letter has laid before me many great and manifest evils in the world of letters, which I had overlooked; but they open to me a very busy scene, and it will require no small care and application to amend errors which are become so universal. The affection of politeness is exposed in this epistle with a



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great deal of wit and discernment; so that whatever discourses I may fall into hereafter upon the subjects the writer treats of, I shall at present lay the matter before the world, without the least alteration from the words of my correspondent:

"To Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire.
Sir,

There are some abuses among us of great consequence, the reformation of which is properly your province; though, as far as I have been conversant in your papers, you have not yet considered them. These are the deplorable ignorance that for some years hath reigned among our English writers, the great depravity of our taste, and the continual corruption of our style. I say nothing here of those who handle particular sciences, divinity, law, physic, and the like; I mean the traders in history, politics, and the *belles lettres*, together with those by whom books are not translated, but as the common expressions are, *done* out of French, Latin, or other language, and made English. I can not but observe to you that until of late years a Grub Street book was always bound in sheep-skin, with suitable print and paper, the price never above a shilling, and taken off wholly by common tradesmen or country pedlars; but now they appear in all sizes and shapes, and in all places. They are handed about from lapfuls in every coffeehouse to persons of quality; are shown in Westminster Hall and the Court of Requests. You may see them gilt, and in royal paper of five or six hundred pages, and rated accordingly. I would engage to furnish you with a catalogue of English books, published within the compass of seven years past, which at the first hand would cost you a hundred pounds, wherein you shall not be able to find ten lines together of common grammar or common sense.



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These two evils, ignorance and want of taste, have produced a third; I mean the continual corruption of our English tongue, which, without some timely remedy, will suffer more by the false refinements of twenty years past than it hath been improved in the foregoing hundred. And this is what I design chiefly to enlarge upon, leaving the former evils to your animadversion.

But instead of giving you a list of the late refinements crept into our language, I here send you the copy of a letter I received, some time ago, from a most accomplished person in this way of writing; upon which I shall make some remarks. It is in these terms:

'Sir,

I *cou'dn't* get the things you sent for all *about town*—I *thot* to *ha* come down myself, and then *I'd h' brot'um;* but I *ha'nt don't*, and I believe I can't *do't*, that's *pozz*—Tom begins to *gi'm-self* airs, because *he's* going with the *plenipo's*—'Tis said the *French* king will *bamboozl us agen*, which causes many speculations. The *Jacks* and others of that *kidney* are very *uppish* and *alert upon't*, as you may see by their *phizz's* —Will Hazard has got the *hipps*, having lost *to the tune of* five *hundr'd* pound, *tho'* he understands play very well, *no body better*. He has *promis't* me upon *rep*, to leave off play; but you know 'tis a weakness *he's* too apt to *give in to, tho'* he has as much wit as any man, *no body more*. He has lain *incog* ever since—The *mob's* very quiet with us now—I believe you *thot* I *banter'd* you in my last, like a *country put* —I *shan't* leave town this month,' etc.

This letter is in every point an admirable



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pattern of the present polite way of writing; nor is it of less authority for being an epistle. You may gather every flower in it, with a thousand more of equal sweetness, from the books, pamphlets, and single papers offered us every day in the coffee-houses: and these are the beauties introduced to supply the want of wit, sense, humor, and learning, which formerly were looked upon as qualifications for a writer. If a man of wit, who died forty years ago, were to rise from the grave on purpose, how would he be able to read this letter? and after he had got through that difficulty, how would he be able to understand it? The first thing that strikes your eye is the breaks at the end of almost every sentence, of which I know not the use, only that it is a refinement and very frequently practised. Then you will observe the abbreviations and elisions, by which consonants of most obdurate sound are joined together, without one softening vowel to intervene; and all this only to make one syllable of two, directly contrary to the example of the Greeks and Romans, altogether of the Gothic strain, and a natural tendency toward relapsing into barbarity, which delights in monosyllables and uniting of mute consonants, as it is observable in all the northern languages. And this is still more visible in the next refinement, which consists in pronouncing the first syllable in a word that has many, and dismissing the rest, such as *phizz*,



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*hipps, mob, pozz, rep,* and many more, when we are already overloaded with monosyllables, which are the disgrace of our language. Thus we cram one syllable, and cut off the rest, as the owl fattened her mice after she had bitten off their legs to prevent them from running away; and if ours be the same reason for maiming our words, it will certainly answer the end; for I am sure no other nation will desire to borrow them. Some words are hitherto but fairly split, and therefore only in their way to perfection, as *incog, plenipo;* but in a short time it is to be hoped they will be further docked to *inc* and *plen.* This reflection has made me of late years very impatient for a peace, which I believe would save the lives of many brave words, as well as men. The war has introduced abundance of polysyllables, which will never be able to live many more campaigns: *speculations, operations, preliminaries, ambassadors, pallisadoes, communication, circumvallation, battalions.* As numerous as they are, if they attack us too frequently in our coffee-houses, we shall certainly put them to flight, and cut off the rear.

The third refinement observable in the letter I send you consists in the choice of certain words, invented by some pretty fellows, such as *banter, bamboozle, country put,* and *kidney,* as it is there applied, some of which are now struggling for the vogue, and others are in possession of it. I have done my utmost


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for some years past to stop the progress of *mob* and *banter,* but have been plainly borne down by numbers and betrayed by those who promised to assist me.

In the last place, you are to take notice of certain choice phrases scattered through the letter, some of them tolerable enough, until they were worn to rags by servile imitators. You might easily find them tho they were not in a different print, and therefore I need not disturb them.

These are the false refinements in our style which you ought to correct: first, by argument and fair means; but if these fail, I think you are to make use of your authority as Censor, and by an annual *Index Expurgatorius* expunge all words and phrases that are offensive to good sense, and condemn those barbarous mutilations of vowels and syllables. In this last point the usual pretense is, that they spell as they speak. A noble standard for language! to depend upon the caprice of every coxcomb who, because words are the clothing of our thoughts, cuts them out and shapes them as he pleases, and changes them oftener than his dress. I believe all reasonable people would be content that such refiners were more sparing in their words, and liberal in their syllables: and upon this head I should be glad you would bestow some advice upon several young readers in our churches, who, coming up from the university full fraught



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with admiration of our town politeness, will needs correct the style of their prayer-books. In reading the Absolution, they are very careful to say *pardons* and *absolves;* and in the prayer for the royal family it must be *endue'um, enrich'um, prosper'um,* and *bring'um.* Then in their sermons they use all the modern terms of art—*sham, banter, mob, bubble, bully, cutting, shuffling,* and *palming;* all which, and many more of the like stamp, as I have heard them often in the pulpit from such young sophisters, so I have read them in some of "those sermons that have made most noise of late." The design, it seems, is to avoid the dreadful imputation of pedantry; to show us that they know the town, understand men and manners, and have not been poring upon old, unfashionable books in the university.

I should be glad to see you the instrument of introducing into our style that simplicity which is the best and truest ornament of most things in life which the politer age always aimed at in their building and dress, *simplex munditiis,* as well as in their productions of wit. It is manifest that all new affected modes of speech, whether borrowed from the court, the town, or the theater, are the first perishing parts in any language; and, as I could prove by many hundred instances, have been so in ours. The writings of Hooker, who was a country clergyman, and of Parsons the


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Jesuit, both in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are in a style that, with very few allowances would not offend any present reader, and are much more clear and intelligible than those of Sir Harry Wotten, Sir Robert Naunton, Osborn, Daniel the historian, and several others who wrote later; but being men of the court, and affecting the phrases then in fashion, they are often either not to be understood or appear perfectly ridiculous.

What remedies are to be applied to these evils I have not room to consider, having, I fear, already taken up most of your paper. Besides, I think it is our office only to represent abuses, and yours to redress them. I am, with great respect, Sir, yours," etc.

## SIR ROGER AND WILL WIMBLE

BY JOSEPH ADDISON

As I was yesterday morning walking with Sir Roger before his house, a country fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. Will Wimble had caught that morning; and that he presented it with his service to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter, which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him:



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"Sir Roger,

"I desire you to accept of a jack, which is the best I have caught this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the perch bite in the Black River. I observed with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it; I will bring half-a-dozen with me that I twisted last week, which I hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days past, having been at Eton with Sir John's eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

"WILL WIMBLE."

This extraordinary letter and message that accompanied it made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them, which I found to be as follows: Will Wimble is younger brother to a baronet, and descended of the ancient family of the Wimbles. He is now between forty and fifty, but being bred to no business, and born to no estate, he generally lives with his elder brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man: he makes a May-fly to a miracle, and furnishes the whole country with angle rods. As he is a good-natured, officious fellow, and very much esteemed upon account of his family, he is a welcome guest at every house, and keeps up


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a good correspondence among all the gentlemen about him. He carries a tulip-root in his pocket from one to another, or exchanges a puppy between a couple of friends that live perhaps in the opposite sides of the country. Will is a particular favorite of all the young heirs, whom he frequently obliges with a net that he has weaved, or a setting dog that he has made himself. He now and then presents a pair of garters of his own knitting to their mothers or sisters, and raises a great deal of mirth among them by inquiring, as often as he meets them, how they wear? These gentleman-like manufactures and obliging little humors make Will the darling of the country.

Sir Roger was proceeding in the character of him, when we saw him make up to us with two or three hazel twigs in his hand that he had cut in Sir Roger's woods as he came through them on his way to the house. I was very much pleased to observe on one side the hearty and sincere welcome with which Sir Roger received him, and on the other the secret joy which his guest discovered at sight of the good old knight. After the first salutes were over, Will desired Sir Roger to lend him one of his servants to carry a set of shuttlecocks he had with him in a little box to a lady that lived about a mile off, to whom, it seems, he had promised such a present for above this half year. Sir Roger's back was no sooner



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turned but honest Will began to tell me of a large cock-pheasant that he had sprung in one of the neighboring woods, with two or three other adventures of the same nature. Odd and uncommon characters are the game that I look for and most delight in, for which reason I was as much pleased with the novelty of the person that talked with me as he could be for his life with the springing of a pheasant, and therefore listened to him with more than ordinary attention.

In the midst of his discourse the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman I have been speaking of had the pleasure of seeing the huge jack he had caught served up for the first dish in a most sumptuous manner. Upon our sitting down to it he gave us a long account how he had hooked it, played with it, foiled it, and at length drew it out upon the bank, with several other particulars that lasted all the first course. A dish of wild fowl that came afterward furnished conversation for the rest of the dinner, which concluded with a late invention of Will's for improving the quail-pipe.

Upon withdrawing into my room after dinner I was secretly touched with compassion toward the honest gentleman that had dined with us, and could not but consider with a great deal of concern how so good a heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles; that so much humanity should be so



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little beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind and application to affairs might have recommended him to the public esteem, and might have raised his fortune in another station of life. What good to his country or himself might not a trader or a merchant have done with such useful tho ordinary qualifications!

Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen than thrive in a trade or profession that is beneath their quality. This humor fills several parts of Europe with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation like ours that the younger sons, tho incapable of any liberal art or profession, may be placed in such a way of life as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family. Accordingly we find several citizens that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes rising by honest industry to greater estates than those of their elder brothers. It is not improbable but Will was formerly tried at divinity, law, or physic, and that, finding his genius did not lie that way, his parents at length gave him up to his own inventions. But certainly, however improper he might have been for studies of a higher nature, he was perfectly well turned for the occupations of trade and commerce. As I think this is a point which can not



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be too much inculcated, I shall desire my reader to compare what I have here written with what I have said in my twenty-first speculation.

## FAMILY GOVERNMENT

HERBERT SPENCER

Whenever you *do* command, command with decision and consistency. If the case is one which really can not be otherwise dealt with, then issue your fiat, and, having issued it, never afterward swerve from it. Consider well beforehand what you are going to do, weigh all the consequences, think whether your firmness of purpose will be sufficient; and then, if you finally make the law, enforce it uniformly at whatever cost. Let your penalties be like the penalties inflicted by inanimate nature—inevitable. The hot cinder burns a child the first time he seizes it; it burns him the second time; it burns him the third time; it burns him every time; and he very soon learns not to touch the hot cinder. If you are equally consistent, if the consequences which you tell your child will follow certain acts follow with like uniformity, he will soon come to respect your laws as he does those of nature.

And this respect, once established, will prevent endless domestic evils. Of errors in edu-



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cation one of the worst is that of inconsistency. As in a community crimes multiply when there is no certain administration of justice, so in a family an immense increase of transgressions results from a hesitating or irregular infliction of penalties. A weak mother who perpetually threatens and rarely performs, who makes rules in haste and repents of them at leisure, who treats the same offense now with severity and now with leniency, according as the passing humor dictates, is laying up miseries both for herself and her children. She is making herself contemptible in their eyes; she is setting them an example of uncontrolled feelings; she is encouraging them to transgress by the prospect of probable impunity; she is entailing endless squabbles and accompanying damage to her own temper and the tempers of her little ones; she is reducing their minds to a moral chaos, which after years of bitter experience will with difficulty bring into order.

Better even a barbarous form of domestic government carried out consistently than a humane one inconsistently carried out. Again we say, avoid coercive measures whenever it is possible to do so; but, when you find despotism really necessary, be despotic in good earnest. Bear constantly in mind the truth that the aim of your discipline should be to produce a self-governing being, not to produce a being to be governed by others. Were



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your children fated to pass their lives as slaves, you could not too much accustom them to slavery during their childhood; but, as they are by and by to be free men, with no one to control their daily conduct, you can not too much accustom them to self-control while they are still under your eye.—From *Education.*

## ESSAY ON CRITICISM

ALEXANDER POPE

But most by numbers judge a poet's song,
And smooth or rough, with them, is right or wrong.
In the bright muse, tho thousand charms conspire,
Her voice is all these tuneful fools admire;
Who haunt Parnassus but to please their ear,
Not mend their minds; as some to church repair,
Not for the doctrine, but the music there.
These equal syllables alone require,
Tho oft the ear the open vowels tire;
While expletives their feeble aid do join,
And ten low words oft creep in one dull line;
While they ring round the same unvaried chimes,
With sure returns of still expected rimes.
Where'er you find "the cooling western breeze,"



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In the next line "it whispers through the trees."
If crystal streams "with pleasing murmurs creep,"
The reader's threatened (not in vain) with "sleep."
Then at the last and only couplet fraught
With some unmeaning thing they call a thought,
A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Leave such to tune their own dull rimes and know
What's roundly smooth or languishingly slow,
And praise the easy vigor of a line
Where Denham's strength and Waller's sweetness join.
True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance.
'Tis not enough no harshness gives offense,
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But, when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,



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The line, too, labors, and the words move slow.
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims
along the main.
Hear how Timotheus' varied lays surprize,
And bid alternate passions fall and rise!
While, at each change, the son of Libyan Jove
Now burns with glory, and then melts with
love.
Now his fierce eyes with sparkling fury glow,
Now sigh steals out, and tears begin to flow;
Persians and Greeks like turns of nature
found,
And the world's victor stood subdued by
sound.
The power of music all our hearts allow,
And what Timotheus was is Dryden now.
Avoid extremes, and shun the fault of such
Who still are pleased too little or too much.
At every trifle scorn to take offense—
That always shows great pride and little sense.
Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the
best
Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move,
For fools admire, but men of sense approve.
As things seem large which we through mists
descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.


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## SHALL WE LIVE AGAIN

BY VICTOR HUGO

I feel in myself the future of life. I am like a forest once cut down; the new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, toward the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds.

You may say the soul is nothing but the resultant of the bodily powers. Why, then, is my soul more luminous when my bodily powers begin to fail? Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart. I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets and the roses, as at twenty years. The nearer I approach the end the plainer I hear around me the immortal symphonies of the worlds which invite me. It is marvelous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history.

For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and in verse: history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode and song—I have tried it all. But I feel I have not said the thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like many others, "I have finished my day's work." But I can not say, "I have finished my life." My day's work will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a



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blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes on the twilight, it opens on the dawn.

## THE MUTABILITY OF LITERATURE

### A Colloquy in Westminster Abbey

BY WASHINGTON IRVING

I know that all beneath the moon decays,
And what by mortals in this world is brought,
In time's great period shall return to nought.
I know that all the muses' heavenly rays,
With toil of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds, of few or none are sought—
That there is nothing lighter than mere praise.
—*Drummond of Hawthornden*

There are certain half-dreaming moods of mind in which we naturally steal away from noise and glare, and seek some quiet haunt where we may indulge our reveries and build our air castles undisturbed. In such a mood I was loitering about the old gray cloisters of Westminster Abbey, enjoying the luxury of wandering thought which one is apt to dignify with the name of reflection, when suddenly an irruption of madcap boys from Westminster School, playing at football, broke in upon the monastic stillness of the place, making the vaulted passages and moldering tombs echo with their merriment. I sought to take refuge from their noise by penetrating still deeper into the solitudes of the pile, and applied to one of the vergers for admission to the library.



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He conducted me through a portal rich with the crumbling sculpture of former ages, which opened upon a gloomy passage leading to the chapter-house and the chamber in which Doomsday Book is deposited. Just within the passage is a small door on the left. To this the verger applied a key; it was double-locked, and opened with some difficulty, as if seldom used. We now ascended a dark, narrow staircase, and, passing through a second door, entered the library.

I found myself in a lofty antique hall, the roof supported by massive joists of old English oak. It was soberly lighted by a row of Gothic windows at a considerable height from the floor, and which apparently opened upon the roofs of the cloisters. An ancient picture of some reverend dignitary of the Church in his robes hung over the fireplace. Around the hall and in a small gallery were the books, arranged in carved oaken cases. They consisted principally of old polemical writers, and were much more worn by time than use. In the center of the library was a solitary table with two or three books on it, an inkstand without ink, and a few pens parched by long disuse. The place seemed fitted for quiet study and profound meditation. It was buried deep among the massive walls of the abbey and shut up from the tumult of the world. I could only hear now and then the shouts of the school-boys faintly swelling from



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the cloisters, and the sound of a bell tolling for prayers echoing soberly along the roofs of the abbey. By degrees the shouts of merriment grew fainter and fainter, and at length died away; the bell ceased to toll, and a profound silence reigned through the dusky hall.

I had taken down a little thick quarto, curiously bound in parchment with brass clasps, and seated myself at the table in a venerable elbow-chair. Instead of reading, however, I was beguiled by the solemn monastic air and lifeless quiet of the place into a train of musing. As I looked around upon the old volumes in their moldering covers, thus ranged on the shelves and apparently never disturbed in their repose, I could not but consider the library a kind of literary catacomb, where authors, like mummies, are piously entombed and left to blacken and molder in dusty oblivion.

How much, thought I, has each of these volumes, now thrust aside with such indifference, cost some aching head! How many weary days! How many sleepless nights! How have their authors buried themselves in the solitude of cells and cloisters, shut themselves up from the face of man, and the still more blest face of Nature, and devoted themselves to painful research and intense reflection! And all for what? To occupy an inch of dusty shelf, to have the titles of their works read now and then in a future age by



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some drowsy churchman or casual straggler like myself, and in another age to be lost even to remembrance. Such is the amount of this boasted immortality. A mere temporary rumor, a local sound, like the tone of that bell which has tolled among these towers, filling the ear for a moment, lingering transiently in echo, and then passing away like a thing that was not!

While I sat half-murmuring, half-meditating, these unprofitable speculations with my head resting on my hand, I was thrumming with the other hand upon the quarto, until I accidentally loosened the clasps, when, to my utter astonishment, the little book gave two or three yawns, like one awaking from a deep sleep, then a husky hem, and at length began to talk. At first its voice was very hoarse and broken, being much troubled by a cobweb which some studious spider had woven across it, and having probably contracted a cold from long exposure to the chills and damps of the abbey. In a short time, however, it became more distinct, and I soon found it an exceedingly fluent, conversible little tome. Its language, to be sure, was rather quaint and obsolete, and its pronunciation what, in the present day, would be deemed barbarous; but I shall endeavor, as far as I am able, to render it in modern parlance.

It began with railings about the neglect of the world, about merit being suffered to lan-



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guish in obscurity, and other such commonplace topics of literary repining, and complained bitterly that it had not been opened for more than two centuries; that the dean only looked now and then into the library, sometimes took down a volume or two, trifled with them for a few moments, and then returned them to their shelves. "What a plague do they mean?" said the little quarto, which I began to perceive was somewhat choleric; "what a plague do they mean by keeping several thousand volumes of us shut up here, and watched by a set of old vergers, like so many beauties in a harem, merely to be looked at now and then by the dean? Books were written to give pleasure and to be enjoyed; and I would have a rule passed that the dean should pay each of us a visit at least once a year; or, if he is not equal to the task, let them once in a while turn loose the whole school of Westminster among us, that at any rate we may now and then have an airing."

"Softly, my worthy friend," replied I; "you are not aware how much better you are off than most books of your generation. By being stored away in this ancient library you are like the treasured remains of those saints and monarchs which lie enshrined in the adjoining chapels, while the remains of your contemporary mortals, left to the ordinary course of Nature, have long since returned to dust."



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"Sir," said the little tome, ruffling his leaves and looking big, "I was written for all the world, not for the bookworms of an abbey. I was intended to circulate from hand to hand, like other great contemporary works; but here have I been clasped up for more than two centuries, and might have silently fallen a prey to these worms that are playing the very vengeance with my intestines if you had not by chance given me an opportunity of uttering a few last words before I go to pieces."

"My good friend," rejoined I, "had you been left to the circulation of which you speak, you would long ere this have been no more. To judge from your physiognomy, you are now well stricken in years; very few of your contemporaries can be at present in existence, and those few owe their longevity to being immured like yourself in old libraries; which, suffer me to add, instead of likening to harems, you might more properly and gratefully have compared to those infirmaries attached to religious establishments for the benefit of the old and decrepit, and where, by quiet fostering and no employment, they often endure to an amazingly good-for-nothing old age. You talk of your contemporaries as if in circulation. Where do we meet with their works? What do we hear of Robert Grosteste of Lincoln? No one could have toiled harder than he for immortality. He is said to have writ-



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ten nearly two hundred volumes. He built, as it were, a pyramid of books to perpetuate his name; but, alas! the pyramid has long since fallen, and only a few fragments are scattered in various libraries, where they are scarcely disturbed even by the antiquarian. What do we hear of Giraldus Cambrensis, the historian, antiquary, philosopher, theologian, and poet? He declined two bishoprics that he might shut himself up and write for posterity; but posterity never inquires after his labors. What of Henry of Huntingdon, who, besides a learned history of England, wrote a treatise on the contempt of the world, which the world has revenged by forgetting him? What is quoted of Joseph of Exeter, styled the miracle of his age in classical composition? Of his three great heroic poems, one is lost forever, excepting a mere fragment; the others are known only to a few of the curious in literature; and as to his love verses and epigrams, they have entirely disappeared. What is in current use of John Wallis the Franciscan, who acquired the name of the tree of life? Of William of Malmesbury, of Simeon of Durham, of Benedict of Peterborough, of John Hanvill of St. Albans, o—"

"Prithee, friend," cried the quarto, in a testy tone, "how old do you think me? You are talking of authors that lived long before my time, and wrote either in Latin or French, so that they in a manner expatriated them-



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selves and deserved to be forgotten; but I, sir, was ushered into the world from the press of the renowned Wynkyn de Worde. I was written in my own native tongue, at a time when the language had become fixt, and, indeed, I was considered a model of pure and elegant English."

(I should observe that these remarks were couched in such intolerably antiquated terms that I have had infinite difficulty in rendering them into modern phraseology.)

"I cry your mercy," said I, "for mistaking your age; but it matters little: almost all the writers of your time have likewise passed into forgetfulness, and De Worde's publications are mere literary rarities among book-collectors. The purity and stability of language, too, on which you found your claims to perpetuity, have been the fallacious dependence of authors of every age, even back to the time of the worthy Robert of Gloucester, who wrote his history in rimes of mongrel Saxon. Even now many talk of Spenser's 'well of pure English undefiled' as if the language ever sprang from a well or fountain-head, and was not rather a mere confluence of various tongues, perpetually subject to changes and intermixtures. It is this which has made English literature so extremely mutable, and the reputation built upon it so fleeting. Unless thought can be committed to something more permanent and unchangeable than such a me-



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dium, even thought must share the fate of everything else and fall into decay. This should serve as a check upon the vanity and exultation of the most popular writer. He finds the language in which he has embarked his fame gradually altering and subject to the dilapidations of time and the caprice of fashion. He looks back and beholds the early authors of his country, once the favorites of their day, supplanted by modern writers. A few short ages have covered them with obscurity, and their merits can only be relished by the quaint taste of the bookworm. And such, he anticipates, will be the fate of his own work, which, however it may be admired in its day and held up as a model of purity, will in the course of years grow antiquated and obsolete, until it shall become almost as unintelligible in its native land as an Egyptian obelisk or one of those Runic inscriptions said to exist in the deserts of Tartary. I declare," added I, with some emotion, "when I contemplate a modern library, filled with new works in all the bravery of rich gilding and binding, I feel disposed to sit down and weep, like the good Xerxes when he surveyed his army, pranked out in all the splendor of military array, and reflected that in one hundred years not one of them would be in existence."

"Ah," said the little quarto, with a heavy sigh, "I see how it is: these modern scribblers have superseded all the good old authors. I



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suppose nothing is read nowadays but Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' Sackville's stately plays and 'Mirror for Magistrates,' or the fine-spun euphemisms of the 'unparalleled John Lyly.'"

"There you are again mistaken," said I; "the writers whom you suppose in vogue, because they happened to be so when you were last in circulation, have long since had their day. Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' the immortality of which was so fondly predicted by his admirers, and which, in truth, was full of noble thoughts, delicate images, and graceful turns of language, is now scarcely ever mentioned. Sackville has strutted into obscurity; and even Lyly, tho his writings were once the delight of a court and apparently perpetuated by a proverb, is now scarcely known even by name. A whole crowd of authors who wrote and wrangled at the time have likewise gone down, with all their writings and their controversies. Wave after wave of succeeding literature has rolled over them, until they are buried so deep that it is only now and then that some industrious diver after fragments of antiquity brings up a specimen for the gratification of the curious.

"For my part," I continued, "I consider this mutability of language a wise precaution of Providence for the benefit of the world at large, and of authors in particular. To reason from analogy, we daily behold the varied and



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beautiful tribes of vegetables springing up, flourishing, adorning the fields for a short time, and then fading into dust, to make way for their successors. Were not this the case, the fecundity of nature would be a grievance instead of a blessing. The earth would groan with rank and excessive vegetation, and its surface become a tangled wilderness. In like manner, the works of genius and learning decline and make way for subsequent productions. Language gradually varies, and with it fade away the writings of authors who have flourished their allotted time; otherwise the creative powers of genius would overstock the world, and the mind would be completely bewildered in the endless mazes of literature. Formerly there were some restraints on this excessive multiplication. Works had to be transcribed by hand, which was a slow and laborious operation; they were written either on parchment, which was expensive, so that one work was often erased to make way for another; or on papyrus, which was fragile and extremely perishable. Authorship was a limited and unprofitable craft, pursued chiefly by monks in the leisure and solitude of their cloisters. The accumulation of manuscripts was slow and costly, and confined almost entirely to monasteries. To these circumstances it may, in some measure, be owing that we have not been inundated by the intellect of antiquity—that the fountains of thought have


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not been broken up and modern genius drowned in the deluge. But the inventions of paper and the press have put an end to all these restraints. They have made every one a writer, and enabled every mind to pour itself into print, and diffuse itself over the whole intellectual world. The consequences are alarming. The stream of literature has swollen into a torrent—augmented into a river—expanded into a sea. A few centuries since five or six hundred manuscripts constituted a great library; but what would you say to libraries, such as actually exist, containing three or four hundred thousand volumes, legions of authors at the same time busy, and the press going on with fearfully increasing activity to double and quadruple the number? Unless some unforeseen mortality should break out among the progeny of the Muse, now that she has become so prolific, I tremble for posterity. I fear the mere fluctuation of language will not be sufficient. Criticism may do much. It increases with the increase of literature, and resembles one of those salutary checks on population spoken of by economists. All possible encouragement, therefore, should be given to the growth of critics, good or bad. But I fear all will be in vain; let criticism do what it may, writers will write, printers will print, and the world will inevitably be overstocked with good books. It will soon be the employment of a lifetime merely to learn their



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names. Many a man of passable information at the present day reads scarcely anything but reviews, and before long a man of erudition will be little better than a mere walking catalog."

"My very good sir," said the little quarto, yawning most drearily in my face, "excuse my interrupting you, but I perceive you are rather given to prose. I would ask the fate of an author who was making some noise just as I left the world. His reputation, however, was considered quite temporary. The learned shook their heads at him, for he was a poor, half-educated varlet, that knew little of Latin, and nothing of Greek, and had been obliged to run the country for deer-stealing. I think his name was Shakespeare. I presume he soon sunk into oblivion."

"On the contrary," said I, "it is owing to that very man that the literature of his period has experienced a duration beyond the ordinary term of English literature. There rise authors now and then who seem proof against the mutability of language because they have rooted themselves in the unchanging principles of human nature. They are like gigantic trees that we sometimes see on the banks of a stream, which by their vast and deep roots, penetrating through the mere surface and laying hold on the very foundations of the earth, preserve the soil around them from being swept away by the ever-flowing



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current, and hold up many a neighboring plant, and perhaps worthless weed, to perpetuity. Such is the case with Shakespeare, whom we behold defying the encroachments of time, retaining in modern use the language and literature of his day, and giving duration to many an indifferent author, merely from having flourished in his vicinity. But even he, I grieve to say, is gradually assuming the tint of age, and his whole form is overrun by a profusion of commentators, who, like clambering vines and creepers, almost bury the noble plant that upholds them."

Here the little quarto began to heave his sides and chuckle, until at length he broke out into a plethoric fit of laughter that had well-nigh choked him by reason of his excessive corpulency. "Mighty well!" cried he, as soon as he could recover breath, "mighty well! and so you would persuade me that the literature of an age is to be perpetuated by a vagabond deer-stealer! by a man without learning! by a poet! forsooth—a poet!" And here he wheezed forth another fit of laughter.

I confess that I felt somewhat nettled at this rudeness, which, however, I pardoned on account of his having flourished in a less polished age. I determined, nevertheless, not to give up my point.

"Yes," resumed I positively, "a poet; for of all writers he has the best chance for immortality. Others may write from the head,



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but he writes from the heart, and the heart will always understand him. He is the faithful portrayer of Nature, whose features are always the same and always interesting. Prose writers are voluminous and unwieldy, their pages crowded with commonplaces, and their thoughts expanded into tediousness. But with the true poet everything is terse, touching, or brilliant. He gives the choicest thoughts in the choicest language. He illustrates them by everything that he sees most striking in nature and art. He entices them by everything that he sees most striking in nature and art. He enriches them by pictures of human life, such as it is passing before him. His writings, therefore, contain the spirit—the aroma, if I may use the phrase—of the age in which he lives. They are caskets which inclose within a small compass the wealth of the language—its family jewels, which are thus transmitted in a portable form to posterity. The setting may occasionally be antiquated, and require now and then to be renewed, as in the case of Chaucer; but the brilliancy and intrinsic value of the gems continue unaltered. Cast a look back over the long reach of literary history. What vast valleys of dulness filled with monkish legends and academical controversies! What bogs of theological speculations! What dreary wastes of metaphysics! Here and there only do we behold the heaven-illumined bards, elevated



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like beacons on their widely-separated heights, to transmit the pure light of poetical intelligence from age to age."

> Thorow earth and waters deepe,
> The pen by skill both passe:
> And featly nyps the worldes abuse,
> And shoes us in a glasse,
> The vertu and the vice
> Of every wight alyve;
> The honey comb that bee doth make
> Is not so sweet in hyve,
> As are the golden leves
> That drop from poet's head!
> Which doth surmount our common talke
> As farre as dross doth lead.
>
> —*Churchyard*

I was just about to launch forth into eulogiums upon the poets of the day when the sudden opening of the door caused me to turn my head. It was the verger, who came to inform me that it was time to close the library. I sought to have a parting word with the quarto, but the worthy little tome was silent, the clasps were closed, and it looked perfectly unconscious of all that had passed. I have been to the library two or three times since, and have endeavored to draw it into further conversation, but in vain; and whether all this rambling colloquy actually took place, or whether it was another of those odd day-dreams to which I am subject I have never to this moment been able to discover.



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## RUFUS CHOATE

BY RICHARD S. STORRS

His relish for thought, and for the powerful expression of thought in the most fit and admirable words, was only matured by his lifelong habit. From the crowd in the court-room, the pressure of cases, the pursuit of clients, and all the elements and the incidents of suits, still quivering with the excitement which had searched every nerve in his throbbing frame, he retreated to the authors, ancient and modern, in whom he delighted; and it was as if he had changed the noisy world for another more serene and exalting. There were the bloom and the music that he loved, the clearer lights on statelier shores, the spirits that touched his to expand and renew it.

Yet, with his instinctive delight in learning, and in the commerce with illustrious minds to which it introduced him, and the constant impressions upon his own intellect which came from eminent orators and thinkers, he retained, absolutely, the native peculiarities of a genius as genuine, and certainly as striking, as has anywhere appeared among American public men.

His mental eye was as fine as a microscope for almost imperceptible distinctions. He penetrated instantly, with affirmative insight,



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to the secret of entangled and complex matters. His logical faculty was as keen and expert as if he had never done anything but state and argue questions of law in the courts. His memory had a grasp which was utterly relentless, on any principle, fact, or phrase; while his judgment was as prompt, within its limits as sagacious, as if he had never heard of Greek particles and never had read a Latin page.

But the imagination was certainly supreme in him; while his fancy was also as sparkling and exuberant as if no argument had ever been wrought by him in its constraining and infrangible links. This made his mind not only stimulating but startling, abundant in surprizes, suddenly radiant on far themes. He said nothing in a commonplace way. A flash of unfamiliar beauty and power was in his slight and casual remarks. The reports of some of them are still, I suspect, as current in court-rooms as when he lived, while, on the larger historical or philosophical subjects, his sentences now and then were as literal sunbursts, enlightening half a continent with their gleam.

He said as little, I should think, as any man who ever lived, of like culture and equal eminence, on the supreme matters of God, destiny, immortality; but I can easily understand, what I used to be told, that, when in rare and preeminent moods he touched upon



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these topics among intimate friends, his words were to the usual words of men on similar subjects as superb, tropical, passion-flowers among the duller, common growths, purple and golden in their hues, while inclosing at their heart memorial signs of the divine sadness.

## THE TRUE, FINE GENTLEMAN

BY SIR RICHARD STEELE

When a good artist would express any remarkable character in sculpture he endeavors to work up his figure into all the perfection his imagination can form, and to imitate not so much what is, as what may or ought to be. I shall follow their example in the idea I am going to trace out of a fine gentleman, by assembling together such qualifications as seem requisite to make the character complete. In order to do this I shall premise in general, that by a fine gentleman I mean a man completely qualified as well for the service and good, as for the ornament and delight, of society. When I consider the frame of mind peculiar to a gentleman, I suppose it graced with all the dignity and elevation of spirit that human nature is capable of. To this I would have joined a clear understanding, a reason free from prejudice, a steady judgment, and an extensive knowledge. When I think of the heart of a gentleman, I imagine


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it firm and intrepid, void of all inordinate passions, and full of tenderness, compassion, and benevolence. When I view the fine gentleman with regard to his manners, methinks I see him modest without bashfulness, frank and affable without impertinence, obliging and complaisant without servility, cheerful and in good humor without noise. These amiable qualities are not easily obtained; neither are there many men that have a genius to excel this way. A finished gentleman is, perhaps, the most uncommon of all the great characters in life. Besides the natural endowments with which this distinguished man is to be born, he must run through a long series of education. Before he makes his appearance and shines in the world, he must be principled in religion, instructed in all the moral virtues, and led through the whole course of the polite arts and sciences. He should be no stranger to courts and to camps; he must travel to open his mind, to enlarge his views, to learn the policies and interests of foreign states, as well as to fashion and polish himself, and to get clear of national prejudices, of which every country has its share. To all these more essential improvements, he must not forget to add the fashionable ornaments of life, such as are the languages and the bodily exercises most in vogue; neither would I have him think even dress itself beneath his notice.



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It is no very uncommon thing in the world to meet with men of probity; there are likewise a great many men of honor to be found. Men of courage, men of sense, and men of letters are frequent; but a true, fine gentleman is what one seldom sees. He is properly a compound of the various good qualities that embellish mankind. As the great poet animates all the different parts of learning by the force of his genius, and irradiates all the compass of his knowledge by the luster and brightness of his imagination; so all the great and solid perfections of life appear in the finished gentleman, with a beautiful gloss and varnish; everything he says or does is accompanied with a manner, or rather a charm, that draws the admiration and good-will of every beholder.

## WIT

BY ISAAC BARROW

But first it may be demanded what the thing we speak of is, or what his facetiousness doth import? To which question I might reply as Democritus did to him that asked the definition of a man, *It is that which we all see and know;* any one better apprehends what it is by acquaintance, than I can inform him by description. It is indeed, a thing so versatile and multiform, ap-



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pearing in so many shapes, so many postures, so many garbs, so variously apprehended by several eyes and judgments, that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear and certain notion thereof, than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of the fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in pat allusion to a known story, or in seasonable application of a trivial saying, or in forging an apposite tale: sometimes it playeth in words and phrases, taking advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound: sometimes it is wrapt in a dress of humorous expression: sometimes it lurketh under an odd similitude: sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd intimation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection: sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or an acute nonsense: sometimes a scenical representation of persons or things, a counterfeit speech, a mimical look or gesture passeth for it: sometimes an affected simplicity: sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being: sometimes it rises from a lucky hitting upon what is strange, sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose: often it consisteth in one knows not what, and springeth up one can hardly tell how. Its ways are unac-



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countable and inexplicable, being answerable to the numberless rovings of fancy and windings of language. It is, in short, a manner of speaking out of the simple and plain way (such as reason teacheth and proveth things by), which by a pretty surprizing uncouthness in conceit or expression doth affect and amuse the fancy, stirring in it some wonder, and breeding some delight thereto. It raiseth admiration, as signifying a nimble sagacity of apprehension, a special felicity of invention, a vivacity of spirit, and reach of wit more than vulgar: it seeming to argue a rare quickness of parts, that one can fetch in remote conceits applicable; a notable skill, that he can dexterously accommodate them to the purpose before him; together with a lively briskness of humor, not apt to damp those sportful flashes of imagination. It also procureth delight, by gratifying curiosity with its rareness or semblance of difficulty (as monsters, not for their beauty, but their rarity; as juggling tricks, not for their use, but their abstruseness, are beheld with pleasure); by diverting the mind from its road of serious thoughts; by instilling gaiety and airiness of spirit; by provoking to such dispositions of spirit in way of emulation or complaisance; and by seasoning matters, otherwise distasteful or insipid, with an unusual, and thence grateful tang.



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## CARE OF OUR TIME

BY JEREMY TAYLOR

He that is choice of his time will also be choice of his company, and choice of his actions; lest the first engage him in vanity and loss, and the latter, by being criminal, be a throwing his time and himself away, and a going back in the accounts of eternity.

God hath given to man a short time here upon earth, and yet upon this short time eternity depends: but so, that for every hour of our life (after we are persons capable of laws, and know good from evil), we must give account to the Great Judge of men and angels. And this it is which our blest Savior told us, that we must account for *every idle word:* not meaning that every word which is not designed to edification, or is less prudent, shall be reckoned for a sin; but that the time which we spend in our idle talking and unprofitable discoursings, that time which might and ought to have been employed to spiritual and useful purposes, that is to be accounted for.

For we must remember that we have a great work to do, many enemies to conquer, many evils to prevent, much danger to run through, many difficulties to be mastered, many necessities to serve, and much good to do, many children to provide for, or many friends to support, or many poor to relieve, or many



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diseases to cure, besides the needs of nature and of relation, our private and our public cares, and duties of the world, which necessity and the providence of God hath adopted into the family of religion.

And that we need not fear this instrument to be a snare to us, or that the duty must end in scruple, vexation, and eternal fears, we must remember that the life of every man may be so ordered (and indeed must) that it may be a perpetual serving of God: the greatest trouble, and most busy trade, and worldly encumbrances, when they are necessary, or charitable, or profitable, in order to any of those ends which we are bound to serve, whether public or private, being a doing of God's work. For God provides the good things of the world to serve the needs of nature, by the labors of the plowman, the skill and pains of the artizan, and the dangers and traffic of the merchant: these men are in their callings the ministers of the divine Providence, and the stewards of the creation, and servants of a great family of God.

God hath given every man work enough to do, that there shall be no room for idleness; and yet hath so ordered the world, that there shall be space for devotion. He that hath the fewest business of the world, is called upon to spend more time in the dressing of his soul; and he that hath the most affairs, may so order them, that they shall be a service of God; while


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at certain periods they are blest with prayers and actions of religion, and all day long are hallowed by a holy intention.

## BIRDS

BY IZAAK WALTON

Those little nimble musicians of the air, that warble forth their curious ditties, with which nature hath furnished them to the shame of art.

At first the lark, when she means to rejoice, to cheer herself and those that hear her; she then quits the earth, and sings as she ascends higher into the air, and having ended her heavenly employment grows then mute and sad, to think she must descend to the dull earth, which she would not touch, but for necessity.

How do the blackbird and thrassel, with their melodious voices, bid welcome to the cheerful spring, and in their fixt months warble forth such ditties as no art or instrument can reach to!

Nay, the smaller birds also do the like in their particular seasons, as, namely, the lavrock, the titlark, the little linnet, and the honest robin, that loves mankind both alive and dead.

But the nightingale, another of my airy



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creatures, breathes such sweet loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight, when the very laborer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have very often, the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted above earth, and say, "Lord, what music hast Thou provided for the saints in Heaven, when Thou affordest bad men such music on earth?"

## OF STUDIES

BY FRANCIS BACON

Studies serve or delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalings of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in stūdies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities



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are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves to give forth direction too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are, like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty; the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores;* nay, there is no stone or impediment in the wit but may



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be wrought out by fit studies: like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins, shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head, and the like. So, if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find difference, let him study the schoolman, for they are *Cymini sectores.* If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases; so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

## LADY CORISANDE

BY LORD BEACONSFIELD

One's life changes in a moment. Half a month ago Lothair, without an acquaintance. was meditating his return to Oxford. Now he seemed to know everybody who was anybody. His table was overflowing with invitations to all the fine houses in town. First came the routs and the balls; then, when he had been presented to the husbands, came the dinners. His kind friends, the Duchess and Lady St. Jerome, were the fairies who had worked this sudden scene of enchantment. A single word


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from them, and London was at Lothair's feet. He liked it amazingly. He quite forgot the conclusion at which he had arrived respecting society a year ago, drawn from his vast experience of the single party which he had then attended. Feelings are different when you know a great many persons, and every person is trying to please you; above all, when there are individuals whom you want to meet, and whom, if you do not meet, you become restless.

Town was beginning to blaze. Brougham whirled and bright barouches glanced, troops of social cavalry cantered and caracolled in morning rides, and the bells of prancing ponies, lashed by delicate hands, jingled in the laughing air. These were stoppages in Bond Street, which seems to cap the climax of civilization, after crowded clubs and swarming parks.

But the great event of the season was the presentation of Lady Corisande. Truly, our bright maiden of Brentham woke and found herself famous. There are families whom everybody praises, and families who were treated in a different way. Either will do; all the sons and daughters of the first succeed, all the sons and daughters of the last are encouraged in perverseness by the prophetic determination of society. Half a dozen married sisters, who were the delight and ornament of their circles, in the case of Lady Corisande were good precursors of popular-



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ity; but the world would not be content with that; they credited her with all their charms and winning qualities, but also with something grander and beyond comparison; and from the moment her fair cheek was sealed by the gracious approbation of Majesty, all the critics of the Court at once recognized her as the cynosure of the Empyrean.

Monsignore Catesby, who looked after Lothair, and was always breakfasting with him without the necessity of an invitation (a fascinating man, and who talked upon all subjects except High Mass), knew everything that took place at Court without being present there himself. He led the conversation to the majestic theme, and while he seemed to be busied in breaking an egg with delicate precision, and hardly listening to the frank expression of opinion which he carelessly encouraged, obtained a not insufficient share of Lothair's views and impressions of human beings and affairs in general during the last few days, which had witnessed a levée and a drawing-room.

"Ah, then you were so fortunate as to know the beauty before her début," said the Monsignore.

"Intimately; her brother is my friend. I was at Brentham last summer. Delicious place! and the most agreeable visit I ever made in my life; at least, one of the most agreeable."



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"Ah! ah!" said the Monsignore. "Let me ring for some toast."

On the night of the Drawing-room, a great ball was given at Crecy House to celebrate the entrance of Corisande into the world. It was a sumptuous festival. The palace, resonant with fantastic music, blazed amid illumined gardens rich with summer warmth.

A prince of the blood was dancing with Lady Corisande. Lothair was there, vis-a-vis with Miss Arundel.

"I delight in this hall," she said to Lothair; "but how superior the pictured scene to the reality!"

"What! would you like, then, to be in a battle?"

"I should like to be with heroes, wherever they might be. What a fine character was the Black Prince! And they call those days the days of superstition!"

The silver horns sounded a brave flourish. Lothair had to advance and meet Lady Corisande. Her approaching mien was full of grace and majesty, but Lothair thought there was a kind expression in her glance, which seemed to remember Brentham, and that he was her brother's friend.

A little later in the evening he was her partner. He could not refrain from congratulating her on the beauty and the success of the festival.



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"I am glad you are pleased, and I am glad you think it successful; but, you know, I am no judge, for this is my first ball!"

"Ah! to be sure; and yet it seems impossible," he continued, in a tone of murmuring admiration.

"Oh! I have been at little dances at my sisters'; half behind the door," she added, with a slight smile. "But to-night I am present at a scene of which I have only read."

"And how do you like balls?" said Lothair.

"I think I shall like them very much," said Lady Corisande; "but to-night, I will confess, I am a little nervous."

"You do not look so."

"I am glad of that."

"Why?"

"Is it not a sign of weakness?"

"Can feeling be weakness?"

"Feeling without sufficient cause is, I should think." And then, and in a tone of some archness, she said, "And how do you like balls?"

"Well, I like them amazingly," said Lothair. "They seem to me to have every quality which can render an entertainment agreeable: music, light, flowers, beautiful faces, graceful forms, and occasionally charming conversation."

"Yes; and that never lingers," said Lady Corisande, "for see, I am wanted."

When they were again undisturbed, Lothair



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regretted the absence of Bertram, who was kept at the House.

"It is a great disappointment," said Lady Corisande; "but he will yet arrive, tho late. I should be most unhappy tho, if he were absent from his post on such an occasion. I am sure if he were here I could not dance."

"You are a most ardent politician," said Lothair.

"Oh, I do not care in the least about common politics, parties and office, and all that; I neither regard nor understand them," replied Lady Corisande. "But when wicked men try to destroy the country, then I like my family to be in the front."

As the destruction of the country meditated this night by wicked men was some change in the status of the Church of England, which Monsignore Catesby in the morning had suggested to Lothair as both just and expedient and highly conciliatory, Lothair did not pursue the theme, for he had a greater degree of tact than usually falls to the lot of the ingenious.

The bright moments flew on. Suddenly there was a mysterious silence in the hall, followed by a kind of supprest stir. Every one seemed to be speaking with bated breath, or, if moving, walking on tiptoe. It was the supper hour.

"Soft hour which wakes the wish and melts the heart."



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Royalty, followed by the imperial presence of ambassadors, and escorted by a group of dazzling duchesses and paladins of high degree, was ushered with courteous pomp by the host and hostess into a choice saloon, hung with rose-colored tapestry and illumined by chandeliers of crystal, where they were served from gold plate. But the thousand less favored were not badly off when they found themselves in the more capacious chambers, into which they rushed with an eagerness hardly in keeping with the splendid nonchalance of the preceding hours.

"What a perfect family," exclaimed Hugo Bohun, as he extracted a couple of fat little birds from their bed of aspic jelly; "everything they do in such perfect taste. How safe you were here to have ortolans for supper!"

All the little round tables, tho their number was infinite, were full. Male groups hung about; some in attendance on fair dames, some foraging for themselves, some thoughtful and more patient and awaiting a satisfactory future. Never was such an elegant clatter.

"I wonder where Carisbrooke is," said Hugo Bohun. "They say he is wonderfully taken with the beauteous daughter of the house."

"I will back the Duke of Brecon against him," said one of his companions. "He raved about her at White's yesterday."



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"Hem!"

"The end is not so near as all that," said a third wassailer.

"I do not know that," said Hugo Bohun. "It is a family that marries off quickly. If a fellow is obliged to marry, he always likes to marry one of them."

"What of this new star?" said his friend, and he mentioned Lothair.

"Oh! he is too young; not launched. Besides, he is going to turn Catholic, and I doubt whether that would do in that quarter."

"But he has a greater fortune than any of them."

"Immense! A man I know, who knows another man——" and then he began a long statistical story about Lothair's resources.

"Have you got any room here, Hugo?" drawled out Lord St. Aldegone.

"Plenty, and here is my chair."

"On no account; half of it and some soup will satisfy me."

"I should have thought you would have been with the swells," said Hugo Bohun.

"That does not exactly suit me," said St. Aldegonde. "I was ticketed to the Duchess of Salop, but I got a first-rate substitute with the charm of novelty for her Grace, and sent her in with Lothair."

St. Aldegonde was the heir-apparent of the wealthiest, if not the most ancient, dukedom in the kingdom. He was spoiled, but he knew



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it. Had he being an ordinary being, he would have merely subsided into selfishness and caprice, but having good abilities and a good disposition, he was eccentric, adventurous, and sentimental. Notwithstanding the apathy which had been engendered by premature experience, St. Aldegonde held extreme opinions, especially on political affairs, being a republican of the reddest dye. He was opposed to all privilege, and indeed to all orders of men, except dukes, who were a necessity. He was also strongly in favor of the equal division of all property, except land. Liberty depended on land, and the greater the landowners, the greater the liberty of a country. He would hold forth on this topic even with energy, amazed at any one differing from him; "as if a fellow could have too much land," he would urge with a voice and glance which defied contradiction. St. Aldegonde had married for love and he loved his wife, but he was strongly in favor of woman's rights and their extremest consequences. It was thought that he had originally adopted these latter views with the amiable intention of piquing Lady St. Aldegonde; but if so, he had not succeeded. Beaming with brightness, with the voice and airiness of a bird, and a cloudless temper, Albertha St. Aldegonde had, from the first hour of her marriage, concentrated her intelligence, which was not mean, on one object; and that was never to cross her husband



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on any conceivable topic. They had been married several years, and she treated him as a darling spoiled child. When he cried for the moon, it was promised him immediately; however irrational his proposition, she always assented to it, tho generally by tact and vigilance she guided him in the right direction. Nevertheless, St. Aldegonde was sometimes in scrapes; but then he always went and told his best friend, whose greatest delight was to extricate him from his perplexities and embarrassments.

. . . . . .

It was agreed that after breakfast they should go and see Corisande's garden. And a party did go: all the Phœbus family, and Lord and Lady St. Aldegonde, and Lady Corisande, and Bertram and Lothair.

In the pleasure-grounds of Brentham were the remains of an ancient garden of the ancient house that had long ago been pulled down. When the modern pleasure-grounds were planned and created, notwithstanding the protests of the artists in landscape, the father of the present duke would not allow this ancient garden to be entirely destroyed, and you came upon its quaint appearance in the dissimilar world which it was placed, as you might in some festival of romantic costume upon a person habited in the courtly dress of the last century. It was formed upon



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a gentle southern slope, with turfen terraces in on three sides, the fourth consisting of arches of golden yew. The Duke had given this garden to Lady Corisande, in order that she might practise her theory, that flower-gardens should be sweet and luxuriant, and not hard and scentless imitations of works of art. Here, in their season, flourished abundantly all those productions of nature which are now banished from our once delighted senses: huge bushes of honeysuckle, and bowers of sweet-pea and sweet-briar, and jessamine clustering over the walls, and gilly-flowers scenting with their sweet breath the ancient bricks from which they seemed to spring. There were banks of violets which the southern breeze always stirred, and mignonette filled every vacant nook. As they entered now, it seemed a blaze of roses and carnations, tho one recognized in a moment the presence of the lily, the heliotrope, and the stock. Some white peacocks were basking on the southern wall, and one of them, as their visitors entered, moved and displayed its plumage with scornful pride. The bees were busy in the air, but their homes were near, and you might watch them laboring in their glassy hives.

"Now, is not Corisande quite right?" said Lord St. Aldegonde, as he presented Madame Phœbus with a garland of woodbine, with which she said she would dress her head at dinner. All agreed with him, and Bertram



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and Euphrosyne adorned each other with carnations, and Mr. Phœbus placed a flower on the uncovered head of Lady St. Aldegonde, according to the principles of high art, and they sauntered and rambled in the sweet and sunny air amid a blaze of butterflies and the ceaseless hum of bees.

Bertram and Euphrosyne had disappeared, and the rest were lingering about the hives while Mr. Phœbus gave them a lecture on the apiary and its marvelous life. The bees understood Mr. Phœbus; at least, he said so; and thus his friends had considerable advantage in this lesson in entomology. Lady Corisande and Lothair were in a distant corner of the garden, and she was explaining to him her plans; what she had done and what she meant to do.

"I wish I had a garden like this at Muriel," said Lothair.

"You could easily make one."

"If you helped me."

"I have told you all my plans," said Lady Corisande.

"Yes; but I was thinking of something else when you spoke," said Lothair.

"This is not very complimentary."

"I do not wish to be complimentary," said Lothair, "if compliments mean less than they declare. I was not thinking of your garden, but of you."

"Where can they have all gone?" said Lady



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Corisande, looking round. "We must find them."

"And leave this garden," said Lothair. "And I without a flower, the only one without a flower? I am afraid that is significant of my lot."

"You shall choose a rose," said Lady Corisande.

"Nay; the charm is that it should be your choice."

But choosing the rose lost more time, and when Corisande and Lothair reached the arches of golden yew, there were no friends in sight.

"I think I hear sounds this way," said Lothair, and he led his companion farther from home.

"I see no one," said Lady Corisande, distrest, and when they had advanced a little way.

"We are sure to find them in good time," said Lothair. "Besides, I wanted to speak to you about the garden at Muriel. I wanted to induce you to go there and help me to make it. Yes," he added, after some hesitation, "on this spot, I believe on this very spot, I asked the permission of your mother two years ago to express to you my love. She thought me a boy, and she treated me as a boy. She said I knew nothing of the world, and both our characters were unformed. I know the world now. I have committed many



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mistakes, doubtless many follies, have formed many opinions, and have changed many opinions; but to one I have been constant, in one I am unchanged, and that is my adoring love for you."

She turned pale, she stopt, then gently taking his arm, she hid her face in his breast.

## BLANK VERSE AND RIME

BY JOHN DRYDEN

I know not whether I have been so careful of the plot and language as I ought; but, for the latter, I have endeavored to write English, as near as I could distinguish it from the tongue of pedants, and that of affected travelers. Only I am sorry, that (speaking so noble a language as we do) we have not a more certain measure of it, as they have in France, where they have an academy erected for that purpose, and endowed with large privileges by the present king. I wish we might, at length, have leave to borrow words from other nations, which is now a wantonness in us, not a necessity; but so long as some affect to speak them, there will not want others, who will have the boldness to write them.

But I fear, lest, defending the received words, I shall be accused for following the new way, I mean, of writing scenes in verse. Tho,



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to speak properly, it is not so much a new way among us, as an old way new revived; for, many years before Shakespeare's plays, was the tragedy of Queen Gorboduc, in English verse, written by that famous Lord Buckhurst, afterward Earl of Dorset. . . . But, supposing our countrymen had not received this writing till of late; shall we oppose ourselves to the most polished and civilized nations of Europe? Shall we, with the same singularity, oppose the world in this, as most of us do in pronouncing Latin? Or do we desire that the brand, which Barclay has (I hope unjustly) laid upon the English, should still continue? *Angli suos ac sua omnia impense mirantur; caeteras nationes despectui habent.* All the Spanish and Italian tragedies I have yet seen are writ in rime. For the French, I do not name them, because it is the fate of our countrymen to admit little of theirs among us, but the basest of their men, the extravagances of their fashions, and the frippery of their merchandise. Shakespeare (who, with some errors not to be avoided in that age, had undoubtedly a larger soul of poesy than ever any of our nation) was the first who, to shun the pains of continual riming, invented that kind of writing which we call blank verse, but the French, more properly, *prose mesuré*, into which the English tongue so naturally slides that, in writing prose, it is hardly to be avoided. And therefore, I admire some men



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should perpetually stumble in a way so easy, and, inverting the order of their words, constantly close their lines with verbs, which, tho commended sometimes in writing Latin, yet we were whipt at Westminster if we used it twice together. I knew some, who, if they were to write in blank verse, *Sir, I ask your pardon,* would think it sounded more heroically to write, *Sir, I your pardon ask.* I should judge him to have little command of English whom the necessity of a rime should force often upon this rock, tho sometimes it can not easily be avoided; and indeed this is the only inconvenience with which rime can be charged. This is that which makes them say, rime is not natural, it being only so when the poet either makes a vicious choice of words, or places them, for rime sake, so unnaturally as no man would in ordinary speaking; but when it is so judiciously ordered that the first word in the verse seems to beget the second, and that the next, till that becomes the last word in the line, which, in the negligence of prose, would be so; it must then be granted rime has all the advantages of prose, besides its own. . . .

The advantages which rime has over blank verse are so many that it were lost time to name them. Sir Philip Sidney, in his "Defense of Poesy," gives us one which, in my opinion, is not the least considerable—I mean the help it brings to memory, which rime so



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knits up, by the affinity of sounds, that, by remembering the last word in one line, we often call to mind both the verses. Then, in the quickness of repartees (which in discoursive scenes fall very often), it has so particular a grace, and is so aptly suited to them, that the sudden smartness of the answer and the sweetness of the rime set off the beauty of each other. But that benefit which I consider most in it, because I have not seldom found it, is, that it bounds and circumscribes the fancy. For imagination in a poet is a faculty so wild and lawless that, like a high-ranging spaniel, it must have clogs tied to it, lest it outrun the judgment. The great easiness of blank verse renders the poet too luxuriant; he is tempted to say many things which might better be omitted, or at least shut up in fewer words; but when the difficulty of artful riming is interposed, where the poet commonly confines his sense to his couplet, and must contrive that sense into such words that the rime shall naturally follow them, not they the rime; the fancy then gives leisure to the judgment to come in, which, seeing so heavy a tax imposed, is ready to cut off all unnecessary expenses. This last consideration has already answered an objection which some have made, that rime is only an embroidery of sense, to make that, which is ordinary in itself, pass for excellent with less examination. But certainly that which most regulates the fancy,



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and gives the judgment its busiest employment, is like to bring forth the richest and clearest thoughts. The poet examines that most which he produceth with the greatest leisure, and which he knows must pass the severest test of the audience, because they are aptest to have it ever in their memory; as the stomach makes the best concoction when it strictly embraces the nourishment, and takes account of every little particle as it passes through. But, as the best medicines may lose their virtue by being ill applied, so is it with verse, if a fit subject be not chosen for it.

## THE ABUSE OF ORATORY

BY THOMAS HOBBES

It was noted by Sallust that in Catiline, who was author of the greatest sedition that ever was in Rome, there was *Eloquentiæ satis, sapientiæ parum; eloquence sufficient,* but *little wisdom.* And perhaps this was said of Catiline, as he was Catiline; but it was true of him as an author of sedition. For the conjunction of these two qualities made him not Catiline, but seditious. And that it may be understood, how want of *wisdom* and store of *eloquence* may stand together, we are to consider what it is we call wisdom, and what eloquence. It is manifest that wisdom consisteth



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in knowledge. Now of knowledge there are two kinds; whereof the one is the remembrance of such things as we have conceived by our senses, and of the order in which they follow one another. And this *knowledge* is called *experience;* and the wisdom that proceedeth from it is that ability to conjecture by the present of what is past and to come which men call *prudence.* This being so, it is manifest presently that the author of sedition, whosoever he be, must not be prudent. For if he consider and take his experiences aright, concerning the success which they have had, who have been the movers and authors of sedition, either in this or any other state, he shall find, that for one man that hath thereby advanced himself to honor, twenty have come to a reproachful end. The other kind of knowledge is the remembrance of the names or appellations of things, and how everything is called, which is, in matters of common conversation, a remembrance of pacts and covenants of men made among themselves concerning how to be understood of one another. And this kind of knowledge is generally called science, and the conclusions thereof truth. But when men remember not how things are named, by general agreement, but either mistake and misname things, or name them aright by chance, they are not said to have science but opinion, and the conclusions thence proceeding are uncertain, and for the most part erroneous. Now


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that science in particular from which proceed the true and evident conclusions of what is right and wrong, and what is good and hurtful to the being and well-being of mankind the Latins called *sapientia*, and we by the general name of wisdom. For generally, not he that hath skill in geometry, or any other science speculative, but only he that understandeth what conduceth to the good and government of the people is called a wise man. Now that no author of sedition can be wise in this acceptation of the word is sufficiently proved, in that it hath been already demonstrated that no pretense of sedition can be right or just. And therefore the authors of sedition must be ignorant of the right of state; that is to say, unwise. It remaineth, therefore, that they be such, as name things, not according to their true and generally agreed-upon names, but call right and wrong, good and bad, according to their passions, or according to the authorities of such as they admire, as Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, and others of like authority, who have given the names of right and wrong, as their passions have dictated; or have followed the authority of other men, as we do theirs. It is required therefore in an author of sedition that he think right that which is wrong, and profitable that which is pernicious; and consequently that there be in him *sapientiæ parum*, little wisdom.

Eloquence is nothing else but the power of



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winning belief of what we say. And to that end we must have aid from the passions of the hearer. Now to demonstration and teaching of the truth, there are required long deductions and great attention, which is unpleasant to the hearer. Therefore they which seek not truth, but belief, must take another way, and not only derive what they would have to be believed from somewhat believed already, but also by aggravations and extenuations, made good and bad, right and wrong, appear great or less, according as shall serve their turns. And such is the power of eloquence, as many times a man is made to believe thereby, that he sensibly feeleth smart and damage when he feeleth none, and to enter into rage and indignation without any other cause than what is in the words and passion of the speaker. This considered, together with the business that he hath to do, who is the author of rebellion, namely, to make men believe that their rebellion is just, their discontents grounded upon great injuries, and their hopes great; there needeth no more to prove, there can be no author of rebellion that is not an eloquent and powerful speaker, and withal, as hath been said before, a man of little wisdom. For the faculty of speaking powerfully consisteth in a habit gotten of putting together passionate words, and applying them to the present passions of the hearer.

Seeing then eloquence and want of discre-



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tion concur to the stirring of rebellion, it may be demanded, what part each of these acteth therein? The daughters of Pelias, king of Thessaly, desiring to restore their old, decrepit father to the vigor of his youth, by the counsel of Medea, chopped him in pieces, and set him a-boiling with I know not what herbs in a caldron, but could not revive him again. So when eloquence and want of judgment go together, want of judgment, like the daughters of Pelias, consenteth, through eloquence, which is as the witchcraft of Medea, to cut the commonwealth in pieces, upon pretense or hope of reformation, which when things are in combustion, they are not able to effect.

## EDUCATION

### BY JOHN MILTON

The end, then, of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love Him, to imitate Him, to be like Him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith makes up the highest perfection. But because our understanding can not in this body found itself but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible, as by orderly con-



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ning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be followed in all discreet teaching. And seeing every nation affords not experience and tradition enough for all kind of learning, therefore we are chiefly taught the languages of those people who have at any time been most industrious after wisdom; so that language is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known. And tho a linguist should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, yet, if he have not studied the solid things in them as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only. Hence appear the many mistakes which have made learning generally so unpleasing and so unsuccessful. First, we do amiss to spend seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek as might be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year. And that which casts our proficiency therein so much behind is our time lost partly in too oft idle vacancies given both to schools and universities, partly in a preposterous exaction, forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses and orations, which are the acts of ripest judgment and the final work of a head filled by long reading and observing, with elegant maxims, and copious invention. These are not



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matters to be wrung from poor striplings, like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit; besides the ill habit which they get of wretched barbarizing against the Latin and Greek idiom, with their untutored Anglicisms, odious to be read, yet not to be avoided without a well-continued and judicious conversing among pure authors digested, which they scarce taste, whereas, if after some preparatory grounds of speech by their certain forms got into memory, they were led to the praxis thereof in some chosen short book lessoned thoroughly to them, they might then forthwith proceed to learn the substance of good things, and arts in due order, which would bring the whole language quickly into their power. This I take to be the most rational and most profitable way of learning languages, and whereby we may best hope to give account to God of our youth spent herein. And for the usual method of teaching arts, I deem it to be an old error of universities not yet well recovered from the scholastic grossness of barbarous ages that instead of beginning with arts most easy, and those be such as are most obvious to the sense, they present their young unmatriculated novices at first coming with the most intellective abstractions of logic and metaphysics; so that they having but newly left those grammatic flats and shallows where they stuck unreasonably to learn a few words with lamentable construction, and



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now on the sudden transported under another climate, to be tossed and turmoiled with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet deeps of controversy, do for the most part grow into hatred and contempt of learning, mocked and deluded all this while with ragged notions and babblements, while they expected worthy and delightful knowledge; till poverty or youthful years call them importunately their several ways, and hasten them with the sway of friends either to an ambitious and mercenary or ignorantly zealous divinity; some allured to the trade of law, grounding their purposes not on the prudent and heavenly contemplation of justice and equity, which was never taught them, but on the promising and pleasing thoughts of litigious terms, fat contentions, and flowing fees; others betake them to state affairs, with souls so unprincipled in virtue and true generous breeding that flattery and court shifts and tyrannous aphorisms appear to them the highest points of wisdom, instilling their barren hearts with a conscientious slavery, if, as I rather think, it be not fained. Others, lastly, of a more delicious and airy spirit, retire themselves, knowing no better, to the enjoyments of ease and luxury, living out their days in feast and jollity, which, indeed, is the wisest and the safest course of all these, unless they were with more integrity undertaken. And these are the errors and these are the


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fruits of misspending our prime youth at the schools and universities, as we do, either in learning mere words, or such things chiefly as were better unlearned.

I shall detain you no longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct ye to a hillside, where I will point ye out the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious, indeed, at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospect and melodious sounds on every every side that the Harp of Orpheus was not more charming. I doubt not but ye shall have more ado to drive our dullest and laziest youth, our stocks and stubs from the infinite desire of such a happy nurture than we have now to hale and drag our choicest and hopefulest wits to that asinine feast of sow-thistles and brambles which is commonly set before them, as all the food and entertainment of their tenderest and most docible age. I call, therefore, a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war. And how all this may be done between twelve and one-and-twenty, less time than is now bestowed in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus ordered.



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## OF SIMPLICITY AND REFINEMENT IN WRITING

BY DAVID HUME

Fine writing, according to Addison, consists of sentiments which are natural without being obvious. There can not be a juster and more concise definition of fine writing.

Sentiments which are merely natural affect not the mind with any pleasure, and seem not worthy of our attention. The pleasantries of a waterman, the observations of a peasant, the ribaldry of a porter or hackney coachman, all of these are natural and disagreeable. What an insipid comedy should we make of the chit-chat of the tea-table, copied faithfully and at full length? Nothing can please persons of taste but nature drawn with all her graces and ornaments—*la belle nature;* or, if we copy life, the strokes must be strong and remarkable, and must convey a lively image to the mind. The absurd naïveté of Sancho Panza is represented in such inimitable colors by Cervantes that it entertains as much as the picture of the most magnanimous hero or the softest lover.

The case is the same with orators, philosophers, critics, or any author who speaks in his own person, without introducing other speakers or actors. If his language be not elegant, his observations uncommon, his sense strong



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and masculine, he will in vain boast his nature and simplicity. He may be correct; but he never will be agreeable. It is the unhappiness of such authors that they are never blamed or censured. The good fortune of a book and that of a man are not the same. The secret deceiving path of life, which Horace talks of, "*fallentis semita vitæ*," may be the happiest lot of the one; but it is the greatest misfortune which the other can possibly fall into.

On the other hand, productions which are merely surprizing, without being natural, can never give any lasting entertainment to the mind. To draw chimeras is not, properly speaking, to copy or imitate. The justness of representation is lost, and the mind is displeased to find a picture which bears no resemblance to any original. Nor are such excessive refinements more agreeable in the epistolary or philosophic style than in the epic or tragic. Too much ornament is a fault in every kind of production. Uncommon expressions, strong flashes of wit, pointed similes, and epigrammatic turns, especially when they recur too frequently, are a disfigurement rather than any embellishment of discourse. As the eye, in surveying a Gothic building, is distracted by the multiplicity of ornaments, and loses the whole by a minute attention to the parts; so the mind, in perusing a work overstocked with it, is fatigued



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and disgusted with the constant endeavor to shine and surprize. This is the case where a writer overabounds in wit, even tho that wit in itself should be just and agreeable. But it commonly happens to such writers that they seek for their favorite ornaments, even where the subject does not afford them, and by that means have twenty insipid conceits for one thought which is really beautiful.

There is no object in critical learning more copious than this of the just mixture of simplicity and refinement in writing; and therefore, not to wonder in too large a field, I shall confine myself to a few general observations on that head.

I. I observe that tho excesses of both kinds are to be avoided, and tho a proper medium ought to be studied in all productions, yet this medium lies not in a point, but admits of a considerable latitude. Consider the wide distance, in this respect, between Pope and Lucretius. These seem to lie in the two greatest extremes of refinement and simplicity in which a poet can indulge himself without being guilty of any blamable excess. All this interval may be filled with poets, who may differ from each other, but may be equally admirable, each in his peculiar style and manner. Corneille and Congreve, who carry their wit and refinement somewhat further than Pope (if poets of so different a kind can be compared together), and Sophocles and



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Terence, who are more simple than Lucretius, seem to have gone out of that medium, in which the most perfect productions are found, and to be guilty of some excess in these opposite characters. Of all the great poets, Vergil and Racine, in my opinion, lie nearest the center, and are the furthest removed from both the extremities.

II. My observation on this head is that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to explain by words where the just medium lies between the excesses of simplicity and refinement, or to give any rule by which we can know precisely the bounds between the fault and the beauty. A critic may not only discourse very judiciously on this head without instructing his readers, but even without understanding the matter himself. There is not a finer piece of criticism than the "Dissertation on Pastorals," by Fontenelle; in which, by a number of reflections and philosophical reasonings, he endeavors to fix the just medium which is suitable to that species of writing. But let any one read the pastorals of that author, and he will be convinced that this judicious critic, notwithstanding his fine reasonings, had a false taste, and fixt the point of perfection much nearer the extreme of refinement than pastoral poetry will admit of. The sentiments of his shepherds are better suited to the toilets of Paris than to the forests of Arcadia. But this it is impossible to discover from his



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critical reasonings. He blames all excessive painting and ornament as much as Vergil could have done, had that great poet written a dissertation on this species of poetry. However different the tastes of men their general discourse on these subjects is commonly the same. No criticism can be instructive which descends not to particulars, and is not full of examples and illustrations. It is allowed on all hands that beauty, as well as virtue, always lies in a medium; but where this medium is placed is a great question, and can never be sufficiently explained by general reasonings.

III. I shall deliver on this subject: That we ought to be more on our guard against the excess of refinement than that of simplicity; and that because the former excess is both less beautiful and more dangerous than the latter.

It is a certain rule that wit and passion are entirely incompatible. When the affections are moved there is no place for the imagination. The mind of man being naturally limited, it is impossible that all its faculties can operate at once; and the more any one predominates the less room is there for the others to exert their vigor. For this reason a greater simplicity is required in all compositions, where men and actions and passions are painted, than in such as consist of reflections and observations. And, as the former species


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of writing is the more engaging and beautiful, one may safely, upon this account, give the preference to the extreme of simplicity above that of refinement.

We may also observe that those compositions which we read the oftenest, and which every man of taste has got by heart, have the recommendation of simplicity, and have nothing surprizing in the thought, when divested of that elegance of expression and harmony of numbers, with which it is clothed. If the merit of the composition lie in a point of wit, it may strike at first; but the mind anticipates the thought in the second perusal, and is no longer affected by it. When I read an epigram of Martial, the first line recalls the whole, and I have no pleasure in repeating to myself what I know already. But each line, each word in Catullus, has its merit; and I am never tired with the perusal of him. It is sufficient to run over Cowley once; but Parnell, after the fiftieth reading, is as fresh as at the first. Besides, it is with books as with women, where a certain plainness of manner and of dress is more engaging than the glare of paint, and airs, and apparel, which may dazzle the eye but reaches not the affections. Terence is a modest and bashful beauty, to whom we grant everything, because he assumes nothing, and whose purity and nature make a durable tho not a violent impression on us.



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But refinement, as it is the less beautiful, so it is the more dangerous extreme, and what we are the aptest to fall into. Simplicity passes for dulness when it is not accompanied with great elegance and propriety. On the contrary, there is something surprizing in a blaze of wit and conceit. Ordinary readers are mightily struck with it, and falsely imagine it to be the most difficult as well as the most excellent way of writing. Seneca abounds with agreeable faults, says Quintilian, *"abundat dulcibus vitiis"*; and for that reason is the more dangerous and the more apt to pervert the taste of the young and the inconsiderate.

I shall add that the excess of refinement is now more to be guarded against than ever, because it is the extreme which men are the most apt to fall into, after learning has made some progress, and after eminent writers have appeared in every species of composition. The endeavor to please by novelty leads men wide of simplicity and nature, and fills their writings with affectation and conceit. It was thus the Asiatic eloquence degenerated so much from the Attic. It was thus the age of Claudius and Nero became so much inferior to that of Augustus in taste and genius. And perhaps there are at present some symptoms of a like degeneracy of taste in France as well as in England.


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## LITERARY COURAGE

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON

Whilst fools one vice condemn,
They run into the opposite extreme.
—CREECH.

That wonder is the effect of ignorance has been often observed. The awful stillness of attention with which the mind is overspread at the first view of an unexpected effect ceases when we have leisure to disentangle complications and investigate causes. Wonder is a pause of reason, a sudden cessation of the mental progress, which last only while the understanding is fixt upon some single idea, and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts or mark the intermediate gradations from the first agent to the last consequence.

It may be remarked with equal truth that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for those who have never accustomed themselves to the labor inquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by conquests over difficulty, to sleep in the gloomy quiescence of astonishment without any effect to animate inquiry or dispel obscurity. What they can not immediately conceive they consider as too high to be reached, or too extensive to be comprehended; they therefore content themselves with the gaze of folly, forbear to attempt



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what they have no hope of performing, and resign the pleasure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious study or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanic art many are of a form so different from that of their first materials, and many consist of parts so numerous and so nicely adapted to each other that it is not possible to view them without amazement. But when we enter the shops of artificers, observe the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progress of a manufacture through the different hands that, in succession to each other, contribute to its perfection, we soon discover that every single man has an easy task, and that the extremes, however remote, of natural rudeness and artificial elegance are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

The same is the state of intellectual and manual performances. Long calculations or complex diagrams affright the timorous and unexperienced from a second view; but if we have skill sufficient to analyze them into simple principles, it will be discovered that our fear was groundless. "Divide and conquer" is a principle equally just in science as in policy. Complication is a species of confederacy which, while it continues united, bids



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defiance to the most active and vigorous intellect, but of which every member is separately weak, and which may therefore be quickly subdued, if it can once be broken.

The chief art of learning, as Locke has observed, is to attempt but little at a time. The wildest excursions of the mind are made by short flights frequently repeated; the most lofty fabrics of science are formed by the continued accumulation of single propositions.

It often happens, whatever be the cause, that impatience of labor, or dread of miscarriage, seizes those who are most distinguished for quickness of apprehension; and that they who might with greatest reason promise themselves victory are least willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid asleep by laziness, or dissipated by pleasures, can arise only from confused and general views, such as negligence snatches in haste, or from the disappointment of the first hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of science will be pierced by a careless glance, or the eminences of fame ascended without labor, is to expect a peculiar privilege, a power denied to the rest of mankind; but to suppose that the maze is inscrutable to diligence or the heights inacessible to perseverance, is to submit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary shackles.



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It is the proper ambition of the heroes of literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge by discovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the success of such undertakings, perhaps, some degree of fortuitous happiness is necessary, which no man can promise or procure to himself; and therefore doubt and irresolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the unexplored abysses of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required than to pursue a path already beaten, and to trample obstacles which others have demolished, why should any man so much distrust his own intellect as to imagine himself unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wished that they who devote their lives to study would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and consider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to science and to life, and unite some knowledge of the present world to their acquaintance with past ages and remote events.

Nothing has so much exposed men of learning to contempt and ridicule as their ignorance of things which are known to all but themselves. Those who have been taught to consider the institutions of the schools as giving the last perfection to human abilities are



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surprized to see men wrinkled with study, yet wanting to be instructed in the minute circumstances of propriety, or the necessary forms of daily transaction; and quickly shake off their reverence for modes of education which they find to produce no ability above the rest of mankind.

"Books," says Bacon, "can never teach the use of books." The student must learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his speculations to practise, and accommodate his knowledge to the purposes of life.

It is too common for those who have been bred to scholastic professions, and passed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honors, to disregard every other qualification, and to imagine that they shall find mankind ready to pay homage to their knowledge, and to crowd about them for instruction. They therefore step out from their cells into the open world with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and scorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whose manners they must imitate, and with whose opinions they must comply, if they desire to pass their time happily among them.

To lessen that disdain with which scholars are inclined to look on the common business of the world, and the unwillingness with



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which they condescend to learn what is not to be found in any system of philosophy, it may be necessary to consider that, tho admiration is excited by abstruse researches and remote discoveries, yet pleasure is not given, nor affection conciliated, but by softer accomplishments and qualities more easily communicable to those about us. He that can only converse upon questions about which only a small part of mankind has knowledge sufficient to make them curious must lose his days in unsocial silence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be useful on great occasions may die without exerting his abilities, and stand a helpless spectator of a thousand vexations which fret away happiness, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readiness of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and therefore no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by a constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this descent from the pinnacles of art no



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honor will be lost, for the condescensions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little things appears, to use the simile of Longinus, like the sun in his evening declination; he remits his splendor but retains his magnitude, and pleases more tho he dazzles less.

## LITERATURE OF KNOWLEDGE AND LITERATURE OF POWER

BY THOMAS DE QUINCEY

What is it that we mean by literature? Popularly, and among the thoughtless, it is held to include everything that is printed in a book. Little logic is required to disturb that definition. The most thoughtless person is easily made aware that in the idea of literature one essential element is some relation to a general and common interest of man, so that what applies only to a local or professional or merely personal interest, even tho presenting itself in the shape of a book, will not belong to literature. So far the definition is easily narrowed; and it is as easily expanded. For not only is much that takes a station in books not literature, but, inversely, much that really is literature never reaches a station in books. The weekly sermons of Christendom, that vast pulpit literature which


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acts so extensively upon the popular mind—to warn, to uphold, to renew, to comfort, to alarm—does not attain the sanctuary of libraries in the ten-thousandth part of its extent. The drama, again, as for instance the finest of Shakespeare's plays in England and all leading Athenian plays in the noontide of the Attic stage, operated as a literature on the public mind, and were (according to the strictest letter of that term) published through the audiences that witnessed their representation some time before they were published as things to be read; and they were published in this scenical mode of publication with much more effect than they could have had as books during ages of costly copying or of costly printing.

Books, therefore, do not suggest an idea coextensive and interchangeable with the idea of literature, since much literature, scenic, forensic, or didactic (as from lecturers and public orators), may never come into books, and much that does come into books may connect itself with no literary interest. But a far more important correction, applicable to the common vague idea of literature, is to be sought, not so much in a better definition of literature, as in a sharper distinction of the two functions which it fulfils. In that great social organ which, collectively, we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices that may



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blend, and often do so, but capable, severally, of a severe insulation and naturally fitted for reciprocal repulsion. There is first, the literature of knowledge, and, secondly, the literature of power. The function of the first is to teach; the function of the second is to move; the first is a rudder; the second, an oar or a sail. The first speaks to the mere discursive understanding; the second speaks ultimately, it may happen, to the higher understanding, or reason, but always through affections of pleasure and sympathy. Remotely it may travel toward an object seated in what Lord Bacon calls dry light; but proximately it does and must operate—else it ceases to be a literature of power—on and through that humid light which clothes itself in the mists and glittering iris of human passions, desires, and genial emotions. Men have so little reflected on the higher functions of literature as to find it a paradox if one should describe it as a mean or subordinate purpose of books to give information. But this is a paradox only in the sense which makes it honorable to be paradoxical. Whenever we talk in ordinary language of seeking information or gaining knowledge, we understand the words as connected with something of absolute novelty. But it is the grandeur of all truth which can occupy a very high place in human interests that it is never absolutely novel to the meanest of minds; it exists eternally, by way of



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germ or latent principle, in the lowest as in the highest, needing to be developed but never to be planted. To be capable of transplantation is the immediate criterion of a truth that ranges on a lower scale. Besides which, there is a rarer thing than truth, namely, power, or deep sympathy with truth. What is the effect, for instance, upon society, of children? By the pity, by the tenderness, and by the peculiar modes of admiration which connect themselves with the helplessness with the innocence, and with the simplicity of children, not only are the primal affections strengthened and continually renewed, but the qualities which are dearest in the sight of heaven —the frailty, for instance, which appeals to forbearance, the innocence which symbolizes the heavenly, and the simplicity which is most alien from the worldly—are kept up in perpetual remembrance, and their ideals are continually refreshed. A purpose of the same nature is answered by the higher literature, viz., the literature of power. What do you learn from "Paradise Lost?" Nothing at all. What do you learn from a cookery book? Something new, something that you did not know before, in every paragraph. But would you therefore put the wretched cookery book on a higher level of estimation than the divine poem? What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge, of which a million separate items are still but a million of advancing steps on



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the same earthly level; what you owe is power, that is, exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upward, a step ascending as upon a Jacob's ladder, from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth. All the steps of knowledge, from first to last, carry you further on the same plane, but could never raise you one foot above your ancient level of earth; whereas the very first step in power is a flight, is an ascending movement into another element where earth is forgotten.

Were it not that human sensibilities are ventilated and continually called out into exercises by the great phenomena of infancy, or of real life as it moves through chance and change, or of literature as it recombines these elements in the mimicries of poetry, romance, etc., it is certain that, like any animal power or muscular energy falling into disuse all such sensibilities would gradually droop and dwindle. It is in relation to these great moral capacities of man that the literature of power, as contradistinguished from that of knowledge, lives and has its field of action. It is concerned with what is highest in man; for the Scriptures themselves never condescended to deal by suggestion or cooperation with the mere discursive understanding. When speaking of man in his intellectual capacity, the Scriptures speak, not of the understanding,



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but of "the understanding heart," making the heart, *i.e.*, the great intuitive (or non-discursive) organ, to be the interchangeable formula for man in his highest state of capacity for the infinite. Tragedy, romance, fairy tale, or epopee, all alike restore to man's mind the ideals of justice, of hope, of truth, of mercy, of retribution, which else (left to the support of daily life in its realities) would languish for want of sufficient illustration. What is meant, for instance, by poetic justice? It does not mean a justice that differs by its object from the ordinary justice of human jurisprudence, for then it must be confessedly a very bad kind of justice; but it means a justice that differs from common forensic justice by the degree in which it *attains* its object, a justice that is more omnipotent over its own ends, as dealing, not with the refractory elements of earthly life, but with the elements of its own creation and with materials flexible to its own purest preconceptions. It is certain that, were it not for the literature of power, these ideals would often remain among us as mere arid notional forms; whereas, by the creative forces of man put forth in literature, they gain a vernal life of restoration and germinate into vital activities. The commonest novel, by moving in alliance with human fears and hopes, with human instincts of wrong and right, sustains and quickens those affections. Calling them



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into action, it rescues them from torpor. And hence the preeminency over all authors that merely teach, of the meanest that moves, or that teaches, if at all, indirectly *by* moving. The very highest work that has ever existed in the literature of knowledge is but a provisional work, a book upon trial and sufferance, and *quamdiu bene se gesserit.* Let its teaching be even partially revised, let it be but expanded, nay, even let its teaching be but placed in a better order, and instantly it is superseded. Whereas the feeblest works in the literature of power, surviving at all, survive as finished and unalterable among men. For instance, the "Principia" of Sir Isaac Newton was a book militant on earth from the first. In all stages of its progress it would have to fight for its existence: first, as regards absolute truth; secondly, when that combat was over, as regards its form, or mode of presenting the truth. And as soon as a La Place, or anybody else, builds higher upon the foundations laid by this book, effectually he throws it out of the sunshine into decay and darkness; by weapons won from this book he superannuates and destroys this book, so that soon the name of Newton remains as a mere *nominis umbra,* but his book, as a living power, has transmigrated into other forms. Now, on the contrary, the "Iliad," the "Prometheus" of Æschylus, the "Othello" or "King Lear," the "Ham-



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let" or "Macbeth," and the "Paradise Lost" are not militant but triumphant forever, as long as the languages exist in which they speak or can be taught to speak. They never can transmigrate into new incarnations. To reproduce these in new forms or variations, even if in some things they should be improved, would be to plagiarize. A good steam-engine is properly superseded by a better. But one lovely pastoral valley is not superseded by another, nor a statue of Praxiteles by a statue of Michael Angelo. These things are separated, not by imparity, but by disparity. They are not thought of as unequal under the same standard, but as different in kind, and, if otherwise equal, as equal under a different standard. Human works of immortal beauty and works of nature in one respect stand on the same footing: they never absolutely repeat each other, never approach so near as not to differ; and they differ not as better and worse, or simply by more and less; they differ by undecipherable and incommunicable differences, that can not be caught by mimicries, that can not be reflected in the mirror of copies, that can not become ponderable in the scales of vulgar comparison



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## ON READING OLD BOOKS

BY WILLIAM HAZLITT

I hate to read new books. There are twenty or thirty volumes that I have read over and over again, and these are the only ones that I have any desire ever to read at all. It was a long time before I could bring myself to sit down to the "Tales of My Landlord," but now that author's works have made a considerable addition to my scanty library. I am told that some of Lady Morgan's are good, and have been recommended to look into "Anastasius"; but I have not yet ventured upon that task. A lady, the other day, could not refrain from expressing her surprize to a friend who said he had been reading "Delphine." She asked if it had not been published some time back. Women judge of books as they do of fashions or complexions, which are admired only "in their newest gloss." That is not my way I am not one of those who trouble the circulating libraries much, or pester the booksellers for mail-coach copies of standard periodical publications. I can not say that I am greatly addicted to black-letter, but I profess myself well versed in the marble bindings of Andrew Millar, in the middle of the last century; nor does my taste revolt at Thurloe's "State Papers" in Russia leather, or an ample impression of Sir William Tem-



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ple's "Essays," with a portrait after Sir Godfrey Kneller in front. I do not think altogether the worse of a book for having survived the author a generation or two. I have more confidence in the dead than the living. Contemporary writers may generally be divided into two classes—one's friends or one's foes. Of the first we are compelled to think too well, and of the last we are disposed to think too ill, to receive much genuine pleasure from the perusal or to judge fairly of the merits of either. One candidate for literary fame, who happens to be of our acquaintance, writes finely and like a man of genius, but unfortunately has a foolish face, which spoils a delicate passage; another inspires us with the highest respect for his personal talents and character, but does not quite come up to our expectations in print. All these contradictions and petty details interrupt the calm current of our reflections. If you want to know what any of the authors were who lived before our time and are still objects of anxious inquiry, you have only to look into their works. But the dust and smoke and noise of modern literature have nothing in common with the pure, silent air of immortality.

When I take up a work that I have read before (the oftener the better), I know what I have to expect. The satisfaction is not lessened by being anticipated. When the entertainment is altogether new, I sit down to it



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as I should to a strange dish—turn and pick out a bit here and there, and am in doubt what to think of the composition. There is a want of confidence and security to second appetite. New-fangled books are also like made dishes in this respect, that they are generally little else than hashes and *rifaccimentos* of what has been served up entire and in a more natural state at other times. Besides, in thus turning to a well-known author there is not only an assurance that my time will not be thrown away, or my palate nauseated with the most insipid or vilest trash, but I shake hands with and look an old, tried, and valued friend in the face, compare notes, and chat the hours away. It is true we form dear friendships with such ideal guests—dearer, alas! and more lasting than those with our most intimate acquaintance. In reading a book which is an old favorite with me (say, the first novel I ever read) I not only have the pleasure of imagination and of a critical relish of the work, but the pleasures of memory added to it. It recalls the same feelings and associations which I had in first reading it, and which I can never have again in any other way. Standard productions of this kind are links in the chain of our conscious being. They bind together the different scattered divisions of our personal identity. They are landmarks and guides in our journey through life. They are pegs and loops on which we



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can hang up, or from which we can take down, at pleasure, the wardrobe of a moral imagination, the relics of our best affections, the tokens and records of our happiest hours. They are for "thoughts and for remembrance." They are like Fortunatus's wishing-cap—they give us the best riches, those of fancy, and transport us, not over half the globe, but (which is better) over half our lives, at a word's notice.

My father Shandy solaced himself with "Bruscambille." Give me for this purpose a volume of "Peregrine Pickle" or "Tom Jones." Open either of them anywhere—at the "Memoirs of Lady Vane," or the adventures at the masquerade with Lady Bellaston, or the disputes between Thwackum and Square, or the escape of Molly Seagrim, or the incident of Sophia and her muff, or the edifying prolixity of her aunt's lecture—and there I find the same delightful, busy, bustling scene as ever, and feel myself the same as when I was first introduced into the midst of it. Nay, sometimes the sight of an odd volume of these good old English authors on a stall, or the name lettered on the back among others on the shelves of a library, answers the purpose, revives the whole train of ideas, and sets "the puppets dallying." Twenty years are struck off the list, and I am a child again. A sage philosopher, who was not a very wise man, said that he should like very well to be



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young again if he could take his experience along with him. This ingenious person did not seem to be aware, by the gravity of his remark, that the great advantage of being young is to be without this weight of experience, which he would fain place upon the shoulders of youth and which never comes too late with years. Oh, what a privilege to be able to let this hump, like Christian's burden, drop from off one's back, and transport oneself, by the help of a little musty duodecimo, to the time when "ignorance was bliss," and when we first got a peep at the raree-show of the world through the glass of fiction, gazing at mankind, as we do at wild beasts in a menagerie, through the bars of their cages, or at curiosities in a museum, that we must not touch! For myself, not only are the old ideas of the contents of the work brought back to my mind in all their vividness, but the old associations of the faces and persons of those I then knew, as they were in their lifetime—the place where I sat to read the volume, the day when I got it, the feeling of the air, the fields, the sky—return, and all my early impressions with them. This is better to me—those places, those times, those persons, and those feelings that come across me as I retrace the story and devour the page, are to me better far than the wet sheets of the last new novel from the Ballantyne Press, to say nothing of the Minerva Press in Leadenhall Street.



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It is like visiting the scenes of early youth. I think of the time "when I was in my father's house, and my path ran down with butter and honey," when I was a little, thoughtless child, and had no other wish or care but to con my daily task and be happy. "Tom Jones," I remember, was the first work that broke the spell. It came down in numbers once a fortnight, in Cooke's pocket-edition, embellished with cuts. I had hitherto read only in school-books and a tiresome ecclesiastical history (with the exception of Mrs. Radcliffe's "Romance of the Forest"); but this had a different relish with it—"sweet in the mouth," tho not "bitter in the belly." It smacked of the world I lived in and in which I was to live, and showed me groups, "gay creatures," not "of the element" but of the earth; not "living in the clouds" but traveling the same road that I did—some that had passed on before me, and others that might soon overtake me. My heart had palpitated at the thoughts of a boarding-school ball, or gala-day at midsummer or Christmas; but the world I had found out in Cooke's edition of the "British Novelists" was to me a dance through life, a perpetual gala-day. The sixpenny numbers of this work regularly contrived to leave off just in the middle of a sentence and in the nick of a story. . . . With what eagerness I used to look forward to the next number and open the prints! Ah, never again shall I feel the



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enthusiastic delight with which I gazed at the figures, and anticipated the story and adventures of Major Bath and Commodore Trunnion, of Trim and my Uncle Toby, of Don Quixote and Sancho and Dapple, of Gil Blas and Dame Lorenza Sephora, of Laura and the fair Lucretia, whose lips open and shut like buds of roses. To what nameless ideas did they give rise, with what airy delights I filled up the outlines, as I hung in silence over the page. Let me still recall them, that they may breathe fresh life into me, and that I may live that birthday of thought and romantic pleasure over again! Talk of the ideal! This is the only true ideal—the heavenly tints of fancy reflected in the bubbles that float upon the spring-tide of human life.

> O Memory, shield me from the world's poor strife,
> And give those scenes thine everlasting life!

The paradox with which I set out is, I hope, less startling than it was; the reader will, by this time, have been let into my secret. Much about the same time, or, I believe, rather earlier, I took a particular satisfaction in reading Chubb's "Tracts," and I often think I will get them again to wade through. There is a high gusto of polemical divinity in them; and you fancy that you hear a club of shoemakers at Salisbury debating a disputable text from one of St. Paul's epistles in a workmanlike style, with equal shrewdness and per-



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tinacity. I can not say much for my metaphysical studies, into which I launched shortly after with great ardor, so as to make a toil of a pleasure. I was presently entangled in the briers and thorns of subtle distinctions—of "fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute," tho I can not add that "in their wandering mazes I found no end," for I did arrive at some very satisfactory and potent conclusions; nor will I go so far, however ungrateful the subject might seem, as to exclaim with Marlowe's Faustus, "Would I had never seen Wittenberg, never read book"—that is, never studied such authors as Hartley, Hume, Berkeley, etc. Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding" is, however, a work from which I never derived either pleasure or profit; and Hobbes, dry and powerful as he is, I did not read till long afterward. I read a few poets, which did not much hit my taste, for I would have the reader understand I am deficient in the faculty of imagination; but I fell early upon French romances and philosophy, and devoured them tooth-and-nail. Many a dainty repast have I made of the "New Eloise," the description of the kiss; the excursion on the water; the letter of St. Preux, recalling the time of their first loves; and the account of Julia's death. These I read over and over again with unspeakable delight and wonder. Some years after, when I met with this work again, I found I had lost



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nearly my whole relish for it (except some few parts), and was, I remember, very much mortified with the change in my taste, which I sought to attribute to the smallness and gilt edges of the edition I had bought, and its being perfumed with rose leaves. Nothing could exceed the gravity, the solemnity, with which I carried home and read the dedication to the "Social Contract," with some other pieces of the same author, which I had picked up at a stall in a coarse leather cover. Of the "Confessions" I have spoken elsewhere, and may repeat what I have said: "Sweet is the dew of their memory, and pleasant the balm of their recollection." Their beauties are not "scattered like stray gifts o'er the earth," but sown thick on the page, rich and rare. I wish I had never read the "Emilius," or read it with less implicit faith. I had no occasion to pamper my natural aversion to affectation or pretense by romantic and artificial means. I had better have formed myself on the model of Sir Fopling Flutter. There is a class of persons whose virtues and most shining qualities sink in, and are concealed by, an absorbent ground of modesty and reserve; and such a one I do, without vanity, profess myself. Now, these are the very persons who are likely to attach themselves to the character of Emilius, and of whom it is sure to be the bane. This dull, phlegmatic, retiring humor is not in a fair



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way to be corrected, but confirmed and rendered desperate by being in that work held up as an object of imitation, as an example of simplicity and magnanimity, by coming upon us with all the recommendations of novelty, surprize, and superiority to the prejudices of the world, by being stuck upon a pedestal, made amiable, dazzling, a *leurre de dupe*. The reliance on solid worth which it inculcates, the preference of sober truth to gaudy tinsel, hangs like a millstone round the neck of the imagination—"load to sink a navy"—impedes our progress, and blocks up every prospect in life. A man, to get on, to be successful, conspicuous, applauded, should not retire upon the center of his conscious resources, but be always at the circumference of appearances. He must envelop himself in a halo of mystery—he must ride in an equipage of opinion—he must walk with a train of self-conceit following him—he must not strip himself to a buff-jerkin, to the doublet and hose of his real merits, but surround himself with a cortège of prejudices, like the signs of the zodiac—he must seem anything but what he is, and then he may pass for anything he pleases. The world loves to be amused by hollow professions, to be deceived by flattering appearances, to live in a state of hallucination, and can forgive everything but the plain, downright, simple, honest truth—such as we see it chalked out in the character of Emilius.



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To return from this digression, which is a little out of place here.

Books have in a great measure lost their power over me, nor can I revive the same interest in them as formerly. I perceive when a thing is good, rather than feel it. It is true,

"Marcian Colonna is a dainty book";

and the reading of Mr. Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes" lately made me regret that I was not young again. The beautiful and tender images there conjured up "come like shadows —so depart." The "tiger-moth's wings," which he has spread over his rich, poetic blazonry, just flit across my fancy; the gorgeous twilight window which he has painted over again in his verse, to me "blushes" almost in vain "with blood of queens and kings." I know how I should have felt at one time in reading such passages; and that is all. The sharp, luscious flavor, the fine aroma, is fled, and nothing but the stalk, the bran, the husk of literature is left. If any one were to ask me what I read now, I might answer with my Lord Hamlet in the play, "Words, words, words." "What is the matter?" "Nothing," they have scarce a meaning. But it was not always so. There was a time when, to my thinking, every word was a flower or a pearl, like those which dropt from the mouth of the little peasant girl in the fairy-tale, or like those that fall from the



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great preacher in the Caledonian chapel. I drank of the stream of knowledge that tempted but did not mock my lips, as of the river of life, freely. How eagerly I slaked my thirst of German sentiment, "as the hart that panteth for the water-springs!" How I bathed and reveled, and added my floods of tears to Goethe's "Sorrows of Werther," and to Schiller's "Robbers."

"Giving my stock of more to that which had too much."

I read and assented with all my soul to Coleridge's fine sonnet, beginning,

Schiller, that hour I would have wished to die,
If through the shuddering midnight I had sent,
From the dark dungeon of the tow'r, time-rent,
That fearful voice, a famish'd father's cry!

I believe I may date my insight into the mysteries of poetry from the commencement of my acquaintance with the authors of the "Lyrical Ballads"—at least, my discrimination of the higher sorts, not my predilection for such writers as Goldsmith or Pope; nor do I imagine they will say I got my liking for the novelists or the comic writers, for the characters of Valentine, Tattle, or Miss Prue, from them. If so, I must have got from them what they never had themselves. In points where poetic diction and conception are concerned, I may be at a loss and liable to be imposed upon; but in forming an estimate of



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passages relating to common life and manners I can not think I am a plagiarist from any man. I there "know my cue without a prompter." I may say of such studies, *"Intus et in cute."* I am just able to admire those literal touches of observation and description which persons of loftier pretensions overlook and despise. I think I comprehend something of the characteristic part of Shakespeare; and in him, indeed, all is characteristic, even the nonsense and poetry. I believe it was the celebrated Sir Humphry Davy who used to say that Shakespeare was rather a metaphysician than a poet. At any rate, it was not ill said. I wish that I had sooner known the dramatic writers contemporary with Shakespeare, for in looking them over, about a year ago, I almost revived my old passion for reading and my old delight in books, tho they were very nearly new to me. The periodical essayists I read long ago. "The Spectator" I liked extremely, but "The Tattler" took my fancy most. I read the others soon after—"The Rambler," "The Adventurer," "The World," "The Connoisseur." I was not sorry to get to the end of them, and have no desire to go regularly through them again. I consider myself a thorough adept in Richardson. I like the longest of his novels best, and think no part of them tedious; nor should I ask to have anything better to do than to read them from beginning to end, to



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take them up when I chose and lay them down when I was tired, in some old family mansion in the country, till every word and syllable relating to the bright Clarissa, the divine Clementina, the beautiful Pamela, "with every trick and line of their sweet favor," were once more "graven in my heart's table." I have a sneaking kindness for Mackenzie's "Julia de Roubigné," for the deserted mansion, and straggling gilliflowers on the moldering garden wall; and still more for his "Man of Feeling"; not that it is better, nor so good, but at the time I read it I sometimes thought of the heroine, Miss Walton, and of Miss —— together, and "that ligament, fine as it was, was never broken." One of the poets that I have always read with most pleasure, and can wander about in forever with a sort of voluptuous indolence, is Spenser; and I like Chaucer even better. The only writer among the Italians I can pretend to any knowledge of is Boccaccio, and of him I can not express half my admiration. His story of the hawk I could read and think of from day to day, just as I would look at a picture of Titian's.

I remember, as long ago as the year 1798, going to a neighboring town (Shrewsbury, where Farquhar has laid the plot of his "Recruiting Officer") and bringing home with me, "at one proud swoop," a copy of Milton's "Paradise Lost," and another of Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," both



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which I have still; and I still recollect, when I see the covers, the pleasure with which I dipt into them as I returned with my double prize. I was set up for one while. That time is past, "with all its giddy raptures"; but I am still anxious to preserve its memory, "embalmed with odors." With respect to the first of these works, I would be permitted to remark here, in passing, that it is a sufficient answer to the German criticism which has since been started against the character of Satan (viz., that it is not one of disgusting deformity, or pure, defecated malice) to say that Milton has there drawn, not the abstract principle of evil, not a devil incarnate, but a fallen angel. This is the Scriptural account, and the poet has followed it. We may safely retain such passages as that well-known one:

> His form had not yet lost
> All her original brightness; nor appear'd
> Less than archangel ruin'd, and the excess
> Of glory obscur'd.

for the theory which is opposed to them "falls flat upon the grunsel edge and shames its worshipers." Let us hear no more, then, of this monkish cant and bigoted outcry for the restoration of the horns and tail of the devil. Again, as to the other work, Burke's "Reflections," I took a particular pride and pleasure in it, and read it to myself and others for months afterward. I had reason for my prejudice in favor of this author. To understand



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an adversary is some praise; to admire him is more. I thought I did both; I knew I did one. From the first time I ever cast my eyes on anything of Burke's (which was an extract from his "Letter to a Noble Lord," in a three-times-a-week paper, *The St. James's Chronicle,* in 1796) I said to myself, "This is true eloquence: this is a man pouring out his mind on paper." All other style seemed to me pedantic and impertinent. Dr. Johnson's was walking on stilts; and even Junius's (who was at that time a favorite with me), with all his terseness, shrunk up into little antithetic points and well-trimmed sentences. But Burke's style was forked and playful as the lightning, crested like the serpent. He delivered plain things on a plain ground; but when he rose there was no end of his flights and circumgyrations; and in this very "Letter" "he, like an eagle in a dove-cot, fluttered *his* Volscians" (the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale) "in Corioli." I did not care for his doctrines. I was then, and am still, proof against their contagion; but I admired the author, and was considered as not a very stanch partizan of the opposite side, tho I thought myself that an abstract proposition was one thing, a masterly transition, a brilliant metaphor, another. I conceived, too, that he might be wrong in his main argument, and yet deliver fifty truths in arriving at a false conclusion. I remember



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Coleridge assuring me, as a poetical and political set-off to my skeptical admiration, that Wordsworth had written an "Essay on Marriage," which, for manly thought and nervous expression, he deemed incomparably superior. As I had not, at that time, seen any specimens of Mr. Wordsworth's prose style I could not express my doubts on the subject. If there are greater prose writers than Burke, they either lie out of my course of study or are beyond my sphere of comprehension. I am too old to be a convert to a new mythology of genius. The niches are occupied, the tables are full. If such is still my admiration of this man's misapplied powers, what must it have been at a time when I myself was in vain trying, year after year, to write a single essay, nay, a single page or sentence; when I regarded the wonders of his pen with the longing eyes of one who was dumb and a changeling; and when to be able to convey the slightest conception of my meaning to others in words was the height of an almost hopeless ambition. But I never measured others' excellences by my own defects, tho a sense of my own incapacity and of the steep, impassable ascent from me to them made me regard them with greater awe and fondness.

I have thus run through most of my early studies and favorite authors, some of whom I have since criticized more at large. Whether those observations will survive me I neither



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know nor do I much care; but to the works themselves, "worthy of all acceptation," and to the feelings they have always excited in me since I could distinguish a meaning in language, nothing shall ever prevent me from looking back with gratitude and triumph. To have lived in the cultivation of an intimacy wtih such works, and to have familiarly relished such names, is not to have lived quite in vain.

There are other authors whom I have never read, and yet whom I have frequently had a great desire to read from some circumstance relating to them. Among these is Lord Clarendon's "History of the Grand Rebellion" after which I have a hankering from hearing it spoken of by good judges, from my interest in the events and knowledge of the characters from other sources, and from having seen fine portraits of most of them. I like to read a well-penned character, and Clarendon is said to have been a master in this way. I should like to read Froissart's "Chronicles," Holinshed and Stowe, and Fuller's "Worthies." I intend, whenever I can, to read Beaumont and Fletcher all through. There are fifty-two of their plays, and I have only read a dozen or fourteen of them. "A Wife for a Month" and "Thierry and Theodoret" are, I am told, delicious, and I can believe it. I should like to read the speeches in Thucydides, and Guicciardini's "History of Florence," and "Don


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Quixote" in the original. I have often thought of reading "The Loves of Persiles and Sigismunda" and the "Galatea" of the same author. But I somehow reserve them, like "another Yarrow." I should also like to read the last new novel (if I could be sure it was so) of the author of "Waverley"; no one would be more glad than I to find it the best.

## MEMORY

BY JOHN LOCKE

Attention and repetition help much to the fixing any ideas in the memory; but those which naturally at first make the deepest and most lasting impression are those which are accompanied with pleasure or pain. The great business of the senses being to make us take notice of what hurts or advantages the body, it is wisely ordered by nature that pain should accompany the reception of several ideas; which supplying the place of consideration and reasoning in children, and acting quicker than consideration in grown men, makes both the old and young avoid painful objects, with that haste which is necessary for their preservation; and, in both, settles in the memory a caution for the future.

Concerning the several degrees of lasting, wherewith ideas are imprinted on the memory, we may observe, that some of them have been



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produced in the understanding by an object affecting the senses once only, and no more than once; others that have more than once offered themselves to the senses, have yet been taken little notice of; the mind, either heedless, as in children, or otherwise employed, as in men, intent only on one thing, not setting the stamp deep into itself. And in some, where they are set on with care and repeated impressions, either through the temper of the body, or some other fault, the memory is very weak. In all these cases ideas in the mind quickly fade, and often vanish quite out of the understanding, leaving no more footsteps or remaining characters of themselves than shadows do flying over fields of corn; and the mind is as void of them as if they had never been there. . . .

The memory of some, it is true, is very tenacious, even to a miracle; but yet there seems to be a constant decay of all our ideas, even of those which are struck deepest, and in minds the most retentive; so that if they be not sometimes renewed by repeated exercise of the senses, or reflection on those kinds of objects which at first occasioned them, the print wears out, and at last there remains nothing to be seen. Thus the ideas, as well as children, of our youth, often die before us, and our minds represent to us those tombs, to which we are approaching, where, tho the brass and marble remain, yet the inscriptions



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are effaced by time, and the imagery molders away. The pictures drawn in our minds are laid in fading colors, and, if not sometimes refreshed, vanish and disappear. How much the constitution of our bodies and the make of our animal spirits are concerned in this, and whether the temper of the brain makes this difference, that in some it retains the characters drawn on it like marble, in others like freestone, and in others little better than sand, I shall not here inquire, tho it may seem probable that the constitution of the body does sometimes influence the memory, since we oftentimes find a disease quite strip the mind of all its ideas, and the flames of a fever in a few days calcine all those images to dust and confusion, which seemed to be as lasting as if graved in marble. . . .

Memory, in an intellectual creature, is necessary in the next degree to perception. It is of so great moment, that where it is wanting all the rest of our faculties are in a great measure useless, and we in our thoughts, reasonings, and knowledge could not proceed beyond present objects, were it not for the assistance of our memories, wherein there may be two defects.

First, that it loses the idea quite, and so far it produces perfect ignorance. For since we can know nothing farther than we have the idea of it, when that is gone we are in perfect ignorance.



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Secondly, that it moves slowly, and retrieves not the ideas that it has, and are laid up in store, quick enough to serve the mind upon occasions. This, if it be to a great degree, is stupidity; and he, who through this default in his memory, has not the ideas that are really preserved there, ready at hand when need and occasion calls for them, were almost as good to be without them quite, since they serve him to little purpose. The dull man, who loses the opportunity while he is seeking in his mind for those ideas that should serve his turn, is not much more happy in his knowledge than one that is perfectly ignorant. It is the business therefore of the memory to furnish to the mind those dormant ideas which it has present occasion for; in the having them ready at hand on all occasions, consists that which we call invention, fancy, and quickness of parts.

These are defects, we may observe, in the memory of one man compared with another. There is another defect which we may conceive to be in the memory of man in general, compared with some superior created intellectual beings, which in this faculty may so far excel man that they may have constantly in view the whole scene of all their former actions, wherein no one of the thoughts they have ever had may slip out of their sight. The omniscience of God, who knows all things, past, present, and to come, and to whom the



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thoughts of men's hearts always lie open, may satisfy us of the possibility of this. For who can doubt but God may communicate to those glorious spirits, His immediate attendants, any of His perfections, in what proportions He pleases, as far as created finite beings can be capable? It is reported of that prodigy of parts, Monsieur Pascal, that, till the decay of his health had impaired his memory, he forgot nothing of what he had done, read, or thought, in any part of his rational age. This is a privilege so little known to most men that it seems almost incredible to those who, after the ordinary way, measure all others by themselves; but yet, when considered, may help us to enlarge our thoughts toward greater perfection of it in superior ranks of spirits. For this of Mr. Pascal was still with the narrowness that human minds are confined to here, of having great variety of ideas only by succession, not all at once; whereas the several degrees of angels may probably have larger views, and some of them be endowed with capacities able to retain together, and constantly set before them, as in one picture all their past knowledge at once. This, we may conceive, would be no small advantage to the knowledge of a thinking man, if all his past thoughts and reasonings could be always present to him. And therefore we may suppose it one of those ways, wherein the knowledge of separate spirits may exceedingly surpass ours.



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This faculty of laying up and retaining the ideas that are brought into the mind several other animals seem to have to a great degree, as well as man. For to pass by other instances, birds learning of tunes, and the endeavors one may observe in them to hit the notes right, put it past doubt with me that they have perception, and retain ideas in their memories, and use them for patterns. For it seems to me impossible that they should endeavor to conform their voices to notes (as it is plain they do) of which they had no ideas. For tho I should grant sound may mechanically cause a certain motion of the animal spirits in the brains of those birds while the tune is actually playing, and that motion may be continued on to the muscles of the wings, and so the bird mechanically be driven away by certain noises, because this may tend to the bird's preservation; yet that can never be supposed a reason why it should cause mechanically, either while the tune was playing, much less after it has ceased, such a motion of the organs in the bird's voice as should conform it to the notes of a foreign sound; which imitation can be of no use to the bird's preservation. But which is more, it can not with any appearance of reason be supposed (much less proved) that birds, without sense and memory, can approach their notes nearer and nearer by degrees to a tune played yesterday, which if they have no idea of in their


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memory, is nowhere, nor can be a pattern for them to imitate, or which any repeated essays can bring them nearer to. Since there is no reason why the sound of a pipe should leave traces in their brains, which not at first, but by their after-endeavors, should produce the like sounds; and why the sounds they make themselves should not make traces which they should follow, as well as those of the pipe, is impossible to conceive.

## FROM "MEMOIRS"

BY EDWARD GIBBON

No sooner was I settled in my house and library, than I undertook the composition of the first volume of my history. At the outset all was dark and doubtful; even the title of the work, the true æra of the Decline and Fall of the Empire, the limits of the introduction, the division of the chapters, and the order of the narrative; and I was often tempted to cast away the labor of seven years. The style of an author should be the image of his mind, but the choice and command of language is the fruit of exercise. Many experiments were made before I could hit the middle tone between a dull chronicle and a rhetorical declamation: three times did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third,



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before I was tolerably satisfied with their effect. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters have been reduced by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size; and they might still be comprest, without any loss of facts or sentiments. An opposite fault may be imputed to the concise and superficial narrative of the first reigns from Commodus to Alexander; a fault of which I have never heard, except from Mr. Hume in his last journey to London. Such an oracle might have been consulted and obeyed with rational devotion; but I was soon disgusted with the modest practise of reading the manuscript to my friends. Of such friends some will praise from politeness, and some will criticize from vanity. The author himself is the best judge of his own performance; no one has so deeply meditated on the subject; no one is so sincerely interested in the event. . . .

So flexible is the title of my history, that the final aera might be fixt at my own choice; and I long hesitated whether I should be content with the three volumes, the fall of the Western empire, which fulfilled my first engagement with the public. In this interval of suspense, nearly a twelvemonth, I returned by a natural impulse to the Greek authors of antiquity; I read with new pleasure the Iliad and the Odyssey, the Histories



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of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, a large portion of the tragic and comic theater of Athens, and many interesting dialogs of the Socratic school. Yet in the luxury of freedom I began to wish for the daily task, the active pursuit, which gave a value to every book, and an object to every inquiry: the preface of a new edition announced my design, and I dropt without reluctance from the age of Plato to that of Justinian. The original texts of Procopius and Agathias supplied the events, and even the characters of his reign: but a laborious winter was devoted to the Codes, the Pandects, and the modern interpreters, before I presumed to form an abstract of the civil law. My skill was improved by practise, my diligence perhaps was quickened by the loss of office; and, excepting the last chapter, I had finished the fourth volume before I sought a retreat on the banks of the Leman Lake. . . .

It was not till after many designs, and many trials, that I preferred, as I still prefer, the method of grouping my picture by nations; and the seeming neglect of chronological order is surely compensated by the superior merits of interest and perspicuity. The style of the first volume is, in my opinion, somewhat crude and elaborate; in the second and third it is ripened into ease, correctness, and numbers; but in the three last I may have been seduced by the facility of my pen, and



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the constant habit of speaking one language and writing another may have infused some mixture of Gallic idioms. Happily for my eyes, I have always closed my studies with the day, and commonly with the morning; and a long, but temperate, labor has been accomplished, without fatiguing either the mind or body; but when I computed the remainder of my time and my task, it was apparent that, according to the season of publication, the delay of a month would be productive of that of a year. I was now straining for the goal, and in the last winter many evenings were borrowed from the social pleasures of Lausanne. I could now wish that a pause, an interval, had been allowed for a serious revisal.

I have presumed to mark the moment of conception: I shall now commemorate the hour of my final deliverance. It was on the day, or rather night, of the 27th of June, 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page, in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau,* or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on recovery of my freedom,



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and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future date of the History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious. I will add two facts, which have seldom occurred in the composition of six, or at least of five, quartos. 1. My first rough manuscript, without any intermediate copy, has been sent to the press. 2. Not a sheet has been seen by any human eyes, excepting those of the author and the printer: the faults and the merits are exclusively my own.

## OF THE IMPORTANCE OF METHOD

BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

What is that which first strikes us, and strikes us at once, in a man of education, and which, among educated men, so instantly distinguishes the man of superior mind, that (as was observed with eminent propriety of the late Edmund Burke), "we can not stand under the same archway during a shower of rain, without finding him out?" Not the weight or novelty of his remarks; not any unusual interest of facts communicated by him; for we may suppose both the one and the



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other precluded by the shortness of our intercourse, and the triviality of the subjects. The difference will be imprest and felt, tho the conversation should be confined to the state of the weather or the pavement. Still less will it arise from any peculiarity in his words and phrases. For if he be, as we now assume, a well-educated man as well as a man of superior powers, he will not fail to follow the golden rule of Julius Cæsar, *insolens verbum, tanquam scopulum, evitare.* Unless where new things necessitate new terms, he will avoid an unusual word as a rock. It must have been among the earliest lessons of his youth, that the breach of this precept, at all times hazardous, becomes ridiculous in the topics of ordinary conversation. There remains but one other point of distinction possible; and this must be, and in fact is, the true cause of the impression made on us. It is the unpremeditated and evidently habitual arrangement of his words, grounded on the habit of foreseeing, in each integral part, or (more plainly) in every sentence, the whole that he then intends to communicate. However irregular and desultory his talk, there is method in the fragments.

Listen, on the other hand, to an ignorant man, tho perhaps shrewd and able in his particular calling, whether he be describing or relating. We immediately perceive that his memory alone is called into action; and that



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the objects and events recur in the narration in the same order, and with the same accompaniments, however accidental or impertinent, in which they had first occurred to the narrator. The necessity of taking breath, the efforts of recollection, and the abrupt rectification of its failures produce all his pauses; and with exception of the "and then," the "and there," and the still less significant "and so," they constitute likewise all his connections.

Our discussion, however, is confined to method as employed in the formation of the understanding, and in the constructions of science and literature. It would, indeed be superfluous to attempt a proof of its importance in the business and economy of active or domestic life. From the cotter's hearth or the workshop of the artizan, to the palace or the arsenal, the first merit, that which admits neither substitute nor equivalent, is, that everything be in its place. Where this charm is wanting, every other merit either loses its name, or becomes an additional ground of accusation and regret. Of one, by whom it is eminently possest, we say proverbially, he is like clockwork. The resemblance extends beyond the point of regularity, and yet falls short of the truth. Both do, indeed, at once divide and announce the silent and otherwise indistinguishable lapse of time. But the man of methodical industry and honorable pursuits



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does more; he realizes its ideal divisions, and gives a character and individuality to its moments. If the idle are described as killing time, he may be justly said to call it into life and moral being, while he makes it the distinct object not only of the consciousness, but of the conscience. He organizes the hours, and gives them a soul; and that, the very essence of which is to fleet away, and evermore to have been, he takes up into his own permanence, and communicates to it the imperishableness of a spiritual nature. Of the *good and faithful servant,* whose energies, thus directed, are thus methodized, it is less truly affirmed, that he lives in time than that time lives in him. His days, months, and years, as the stops and punctual marks in the records of duties performed, will survive the wreck of worlds, and remain extant when time itself shall be no more.

But as the importance of method in the duties of social life is incomparably greater, so are its practical elements proportionably obvious, and such as relate to the will far more than to the understanding. Henceforward, therefore, we contemplate its bearings on the latter.

The difference between the products of a well-disciplined and those of an uncultivated understanding, in relation to what we will now venture to call the science of method, is often and admirably exhibited by our great


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dramatist. I scarcely need refer my readers to the Clown's evidence, in the first scene of the second act of "Measure for Measure," or to the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet." . . .

The absence of method, which characterizes the uneducated, is occasioned by an habitual submission of the understanding to mere events and images as such, and independent of any power in the mind to classify or appropriate them. The general accompaniments of time and place are the only relations which persons of this class appear to regard in their statements. As this constitutes their leading feature, the contrary excellence, as distinguishing the well-educated man, must be referred to the contrary habit. Method, therefore, becomes natural to the mind, which has been accustomed to contemplate not things only, or for their own sake alone, but likewise and chiefly the relations of things, either their relations to each other, or to the observer, or to the state and apprehensions of the hearers. To enumerate and analyze these relations, with the conditions under which alone they are discoverable, is to teach the science of method. . . .

Exuberance of mind, on the one hand, interferes with the forms of method; but sterility of mind, on the other, wanting the spring and impulse to mental action, is wholly destructive of method itself. For in attending too exclusively to the relations which the past



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or passing events and objects bear to general truth, and the moods of his own thought, the most intelligent man is sometimes in danger of overlooking that other relation, in which they are likewise to be placed to the apprehension and sympathies of his hearers. His discourse appears like soliloquy intermixed with dialog. But the uneducated and unreflecting talker overlooks all mental relations, both logical and psychological; and consequently precludes all method which is not purely accidental. Hence the nearer the things and incidents in time and place, the more distant, disjointed, and impertinent to each other, and to any common purpose, will they appear in his narration: and this from the want of a staple, or starting-post, in the narrator himself; from the absence of the leading thought, which, borrowing a phrase from the nomenclature of legislation, I may not inaptly call the initiative. On the contrary, where the habit of method is present and effective, things the most remote and diverse in time, place, and outward circumstance, are brought into mental contiguity and succession, the more striking as the less expected.



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## ENGLISH COMPOSITION

BY WILLIAM COBBETT

Language is made use of for one of three purposes, namely, to *inform*, to *convince*, or to *persuade*. The first, requiring merely the talent of telling what we know, is a matter of little difficulty. The second demands *reasoning*. The third, besides reasoning, demands all the aid that we can obtain from the use of figures of speech, or, as they are sometimes called, *figures of rhetoric*, which last word means, the power of persuasion.

Whatever may be the purpose for which we use language, it seldom can happen that we do not stand in need of more than one sentence; and, therefore, others must be added. There is no precise rule; there can be no precise *rule* with regard to the manner of doing this. When we have said one thing, we must add another; and so on, until we have said all that we have to say. But we ought to take care, and great care, that if any words in a sentence relate, in any way, to words that have *gone* before, we make these words correspond grammatically with those foregoing words. . . .

The *order* of the matter will be, in almost all cases, that of your thoughts. Sit down *to write what you have thought*, and not *to think what you shall write*. Use the first



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words that occur to you, and never attempt to *alter a thought,* for that which has come of itself into your mind is likely to pass into that of another more readily and with more effect than anything which you can, by reflection, invent.

Never stop to *make choice of words.* Put down your thought in words just as they come. Follow the order which your thought will point out, and it will push you on to get it upon the paper as quickly and as clearly as possible.

Thoughts come much faster than we can put them upon paper. They produce one another, and this order of their coming is, in almost every case, the best possible order that they can have on paper; yet, if you have several in your mind, rising above each other in point of force, the most forcible will naturally come the last upon paper.

Mr. Lindley Murray gives *rules* about *long sentences* and *short sentences,* and about *a due mixture* of long and short; and he also gives rules about the *letters* that sentences should *begin* with and the *syllables* that they should *end* with. Such rules might be very well if we were to *sing* our writing; but, when the use of writing is to *inform,* to *convince,* or to *persuade,* what can it have to do with such rules? . . .

A writing, or written discourse, is generally broken into *paragraphs.* When a new para-



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graph should begin, the nature of your thoughts must tell you. The propriety of it will be pointed out to you by the difference between the thoughts which are coming and those which have gone before. It is impossible to frame rules for regulating such divisions. When a man divides his work into parts, books, chapters and sections, he makes the divisions according to that which the matter has taken in his mind; and when he comes to write, he has no other guide for the distribution of his matter into sentences and paragraphs.

*Never write about any matter that you do not well understand.* If you clearly understand all about your matter you will never want thoughts, and thoughts instantly become words.

One of the greatest of all faults in writing and in speaking is this—the using of many words to *say little.* In order to guard yourself against this fault, inquire what is the *substance* or *amount* of what you have said. Take a long speech of some talking lord, and put down upon paper what the *amount* of it is. You will mostly find that the amount is very small; but, at any rate, when you get it, you will then be able to examine it, and to tell what it is worth. A very few examinations of this sort will so frighten you that you will be forever after upon your guard against *talking a great deal and saying little.*



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*Figurative language* is very fine when properly employed, but figures of rhetoric are edge tools and two-edge tools, too. Take care how you touch them! They are called *figures,* because they represent other things than the words in their literal meaning stand for. For instance, "The tyrants oppress and starve the people. The people would live amidst abundance, if those *cormorants* did not devour the fruit of their labor." I shall only observe to you upon this subject that, if you use figures of rhetoric, you ought to take care that they do not make nonsense of what you say, nor excite the ridicule of those to whom you write. Mr. Murray, in an address to his students, tells them that he is about to offer them some advice with regard to "their future *walks* in the *paths* of literature." Now, tho a man may *take a walk* along *a path,* a walk means also *the ground* laid out in a certain shape, and such a walk *is wider than a path.* He, in another part of this address, tells them, that they are in "the *morning* of life, and that is the *season* for exertion." The morning, my dear James, is *not a season.* The *year,* indeed, has seasons, but the *day* has none. If he had said the *spring* of life, then he might have added the *season* of exertion. I told you they were *edge-tools.* Beware of them.



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## THE ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE

BY DUGALD STEWART

In the case of objects which fall under the cognizance of any of our external senses it is easy to conceive the origin of the different classes of words composing a conventional dialect; to conceive, for example, that two savages should agree to call this animal a *horse* and that tree an *oak*. But, in words relating to things intellectual and moral, in what manner was the conventional connection at first established between the sign and the thing signified? In what manner (to take one of the simplest instances) was it settled that the name of imagination should be given to one operation of the mind; that of recollection to a second; that of deliberation to a third; that of sagacity or foresight to a fourth? Or, supposing the use of these words to be once introduced, how was their meaning to be explained to a novice, altogether unaccustomed to think upon such subjects?

In answer to this question, it is to be observed, in the first place, that the meaning of many words, of which it is impossible to exhibit any sensible prototypes, is gradually collected by a species of induction, which is more or less successfully conducted by different individuals, according to the degree of their attention and judgment. The connection in



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which an unknown term stands in relation to the other words combined with it in the same sentence often affords a key for its explanation in that particular instance; and, in proportion as such instances are multiplied in the writings and conversation of men well acquainted with propriety of speech, the means are afforded of a progressive approximation toward its precise import. A familiar illustration of this process presents itself in the expedient which a reader naturally employs for deciphering the meaning of an unknown word in a foreign language, when he happens not to have a dictionary at hand. The first sentence where the word occurs affords, it is probable, sufficient foundation for a vague conjecture concerning the notion annexed to it by the author, some idea or other being necessarily substituted in its place in order to make the passage at all intelligible. The next sentence where it is involved renders this conjecture a little more definite; a third sentence contracts the field of doubt within still narrower limits, till, at length, in more extensive induction fixes completely the signification we are in quest of. Doubtless it is in some such way as this that children slowly and imperceptibly enter into the abstract and complex notions annexed to numberless words in their mother tongue, of which we should find it difficult or impossible to convey the sense by formal definitions.



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The strong tendency of the mind to express itself metaphorically, or analogically, on all abstract subjects supplies another help to facilitate the acquisition of language. The prevalence of this tendency among rude nations has been often remarked, and has been commonly accounted for, partly from the warmth of imagination supposed to be peculiarly characteristical of savages, and partly from the imperfections of their scanty vocabularies. The truth, however, is, that the same disposition is exhibited by man in every stage of his progress, prompting him uniformly whenever the enlargement of his knowledge requires the use of a new word for the communication of his meaning, instead of coining at once a sound altogether arbitrary, to assist, as far as possible, the apprehension of his hearers, either by the happy employment of some old word in a metaphorical sense, or by grafting etymologically on some well-known stock a new *derivative,* significant, to his own fancy, of the thought he wishes to impart.

To this bias of the mind to enrich language, rather by a modification of old materials than by the creation of new ones, it is owing that the number of primitive or radical words in a cultivated tongue bears so small a proportion to the whole amount of its vocabulary. In an original language, such as the Greek, the truth of this remark may be easily verified; and, accordingly, it is asserted by Adam



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Smith, that the number of its primitives does not exceed three hundred. In the compounded languages now spoken in Europe it is a much more difficult task to establish the fact; but an irresistible presumption in its favor arises from this circumstance, that all who have turned their attention of late in this island to the study of etymology, are imprest with a deep and increasing conviction, founded on the discoveries which have been already made, that this branch of learning is still in its infancy, and that the roots of an immense variety of words, commonly supposed to be genuine *radicals*, may be traced, in a satisfactory manner, to the Saxon or to the Icelandic. The delight which all men, however unlettered, take in indulging their crude conjectures on the etymological questions which are occasionally started in conversation, is founded on the same circumstance—their experimental knowledge of the difficulty of introducing into popular speech a new sound, entirely arbitrary in its selection, and coined out of materials unemployed before. Another illustration of this occurs in the reluctance with which we adopt the idiomatical turns of expression in a foreign tongue, or even the cant words and phrases which, from time to time, are springing up in our own, till we have succeeded in forming some theory or conjecture to reconcile the apparent anomaly with the ordinary laws of human thought.



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## THE SAGACITY OF THE SPIDER

BY OLIVER GOLDSMITH

I perceived, about four years ago, a large spider in one corner of my room making its web, and tho the maid frequently leveled her fatal broom against the labors of the little animal, I had the good fortune then to prevent its destruction, and, I may say, it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.

In three days the web was with incredible diligence completed; nor could I avoid thinking that the insect seemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traversed it round, examined the strength of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The first enemy, however, it had to encounter was another and a much larger spider, which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhausted all its stock in former labors of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbor. Soon then a terrible encounter ensued, in which the invader seemed to have the victory, and the laborious spider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor using every art to draw the enemy from his stronghold. He seemed to go off, but quickly returned, and when he found all arts vain began to demolish the new web without mercy. This



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brought on another battle, and, contrary to my expectations, the laborious spider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagonist.

Now then, in peaceable possession of what was justly its own, it waited three days with the utmost impatience, repairing the breaches of its web and taking no sustenance that I could perceive. At last, however, a large blue fly fell into the snare, and struggled hard to get loose. The spider gave it leave to entangle itself as much as possible, but it seemed to be too strong for the cobweb. I must own I was greatly surprized when I saw the spider immediately sally out, and in less than a minute weave a new net round its captive, by which the motion of its wings was stopt, and when it was fairly hampered in this manner it was seized and dragged into the hole.

In this manner it lived in a precarious state, and nature seemed to have fitted it for such a life, for upon a single fly it subsisted for more than a week. I once put a wasp into the net, but when the spider came out in order to seize it as usual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with, it instantly broke all the bands that held it fast, and contributed all that lay in its power to disengage so formidable an antagonist. When the wasp was at liberty I expected the spider would have set about repairing the breaches that were made in its net, but those it seems were irreparable, wherefore the cobweb was entirely



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forsaken and a new one begun, which was completed in the usual time.

I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a single spider could furnish; wherefore I destroyed this, and the insect set about another. When I destroyed the other also, its whole stock seemed entirely exhausted, and it could spin no more. The arts it made use of to support itself, now deprived of its great means of subsistence, were indeed surprizing. I have seen it roll up its legs like a ball and lie motionless for hours together, but cautiously watching all the time; when a fly happened to approach sufficiently near it would dart out all at once and often seize its prey.

Of this life, however, it soon began to grow weary, and resolved to invade the possession of some other spider, since it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighboring fortification with great vigor, and at first was as vigorously repulsed. Not daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay siege to another's web for three days; and at length, having killed the defendant, actually took possession. When smaller flies happen to fall into the snare, the spider does not sally out at once, but very patiently waits till it is sure of them; for upon his immediately approaching, the terror of his appearance might give the captive strength sufficient to get loose; the manner then is to wait patiently till, by ineffectu-



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al and impotent struggles, the captive has wasted all its strength, and then it becomes a certain and easy conquest.

The insect I am now describing lived three years; every year it changed its skin and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first it dreaded my approach to its web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand, and upon my touching any part of the web would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defense or an attack.

## THE EMIGRATION OF THE PILGRIM FATHERS

BY EDWARD EVERETT

It is sad, indeed, to reflect on the disasters which this little band of Pilgrims encountered. Sad to see a portion of them the prey of unrelenting cupidity, treacherously embark in an unseaworthy ship, which they are soon obliged to abandon, and crowd themselves into one vessel—one hundred persons, besides the ship's company, in a vessel of one hundred and sixty tons. One is touched at the story of the long, cold and weary autumnal passage; of the landing on the inhospitable rocks at this dismal season, where they are deserted before long by the ship which had brought them, and



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which seemed their only hold upon the world of fellow men—a prey to the elements and to want, and fearfully ignorant of the numbers, the power, and the temper of the savage tribes that filled the unexplored continent upon whose verge they had ventured. But all this wrought together for good. These trials of wandering and exile, of the ocean, the winter, the wilderness, and the savage foe, were the final assurance of success. It was these that put far away from our fathers' cause all patrician softness, all hereditary claims to preeminence. No effeminate nobility crowded into the dark and austere ranks of the Pilgrims. No Carr nor Villiers desired to lead on the ill-provided band of despised Puritans. No well-endowed clergy were on the alert to quit their cathedrals and set up a pompous hierarchy in the frozen wilderness. No craving governors were anxious to be sent over to our cheerless El Dorados of ice and of snow. No; they could not say they had encouraged, patronized, or helped the Pilgrims. They could not afterward fairly pretend to reap where they had not sown; and as our fathers reared this broad and solid fabric with pains and watchfulness, unaided, barely tolerated, it did not fall when the arm which had never supported was raised to destroy.

Methinks I see it now, that one solitary, adventurous vessel, the *Mayflower* of a forlorn hope, freighted with the prospects of a



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future State, and bound across the unknown sea. I behold it pursuing with a thousand misgivings, the uncertain, the tedious voyage. Suns, rise and set, and weeks and months pass, and winter surprizes them on the deep, but brings them not the sight of the wished-for shore. I see them now scantily supplied with provisions, crowded almost to suffocation in their ill-stored prison, delayed by calms, pursuing a circuitous route, and now driven in fury before the raging tempest, on the high and giddy waves. The awful voice of the storm howls through the rigging; the laboring masts seem straining from their base; the dismal sound of the pumps is heard; the ship leaps, as it were, madly from billow to billow; the ocean breaks and settles with engulfing floods over the floating deck, and beats with deadening weight against the staggered vessel. I see them, escaped from these perils, pursuing their all but desperate undertaking, and landed at last, after five months' passage on the ice-clad rocks of Plymouth, weak and weary from the voyage, poorly armed, scantily provisioned, depending on the charity of their shipmaster for a draught of beer on board, drinking nothing but water on shore, without shelter, without means, surrounded by hostile tribes. Shut now the volume of history, and tell me, on any principle of human probability, what shall be the fate of this handful of adventurers? Tell me, man of military science,



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in how many months were they all swept off by the thirty savage tribes enumerated within the early limits of New England? Tell me, politician, how long did this shadow of a colony, on which your conventions and treaties had not smiled, languish on the distant coast? Student of history, compare for me the baffled projects, the deserted settlements, the abandoned adventures of other times, and find the parallel of this. Was it the winter's storm, beating upon the houseless heads of women and children; was it hard labor and spare meals; was it disease; was it the tomahawk; was it the deep malady of a blighted hope, a ruined enterprise, and a broken heart, aching in its last moments at the recollection of the loved and left beyond the sea? Was it some, or all of these united, that hurried this forsaken company to their melancholy fate? And is it possible that neither of these causes, that not all combined, were able to blast this bud of hope? Is it possible that from a beginning so feeble, so frail, so worthy not so much of admiration as of pity, there has gone forth a progress so steady, a growth so wonderful, a reality so important, a promise yet to be fulfilled so glorious?



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## "WHAT'S THE NEWS?"

BY HENRY DAVID THOREAU

To a philosopher all *news*, as it is called, is gossip, and they who edit and read it are old women over their tea. Yet not a few are greedy after this gossip. There was such a rush, as I hear, the other day at one of the offices to hear the foreign news by the last arrival that several large squares of plate glass belonging to the establishment were broken by the pressure—news which I seriously think a ready wit might write a twelvemonth or twelve years beforehand with sufficient accuracy. As for Spain, for instance, if you know how to throw in Don Carlos and the Infanta, and Don Pedro and Seville and Granada, from time to time in the right proportions—they may have changed the names a little since I saw the papers—and serve up a bull fight when other entertainments fail, it will be true to the letter, and give us as good an idea of the exact state or ruin of things in Spain as the most succinct and lucid reports under this head in the newspapers; and as for England, almost the last significant scrap of news from that quarter was the Revolution of 1649; and if you have learned the history of her crops for an average year, you never need attend to that thing again, unless your speculations are



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of a merely pecuniary character. If one may judge who rarely looks into the newspapers, nothing new does ever happen in foreign parts, a French revolution not excepted.

What news! How much more important to know what that is which was never old! "Kieou-he-yu (great dignitary of the State of Wei) sent a man to Khoung-tseu to know his news. Khoung-tseu caused the messenger to be seated near him, and questioned him in these terms: 'What is your master doing?' The messenger answered with respect: 'My master desires to diminish the number of his faults, but he can not come to the end of them.' The messenger being gone, the philosopher remarked: 'What a worthy messenger! What a worthy messenger!' " The preacher, instead of vexing the ears of drowsy farmers on their day of rest at the end of the week—for Sunday is the fit conclusion of an ill-spent week, and not the fresh and brave beginning of a new one—with this one other draggle-tail of a sermon, should shout with thundering voice: "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

Shams and delusions are esteemed for soundest truths, while reality is fabulous. If men would steadily observe realities only, and not allow themselves to be deluded, life, to compare it with such things as we know, would be like a fairy tale and the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If we respected only what



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is inevitable and has a right to be, music and poetry would resound along the streets.

## THE LAST OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic, and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leapt to my feet; but the measured, rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person, a sickly smile quivered about his lips, and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it? Yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it; yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I



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not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now—to-night—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? *Madman!*" Here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—"*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell—the huge antigue panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust—but, then, without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the Lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trem-



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bling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold, then, with a low, moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

## MR. JINGLE AND JOB TROTTER TAKE LEAVE

BY CHARLES DICKENS

"Mr. Nupkins," said the elder lady, "this is not a fit conversation for the servants to overhear. Let these wretches be removed."

"Certainly, my dear," said Mr. Nupkins. "Muzzle!"

"Your worship."

"Open the front door."

"Yes, your worship."

"Leave the house!" said Mr. Nupkins, waving his hand emphatically.

Jingled smiled, and moved toward the door.

"Stay!" said Mr. Pickwick.

Jingle stopt.

"I might," said Mr. Pickwick, "have taken a much greater revenge for the treatment I have experienced at your hands, and that of your hypocritical friend there."

Here Job Trotter bowed with great politeness and laid his hand upon his heart.



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"I say," said Mr. Pickwick, growing gradually angry, "that I might have taken a greater revenge, but I content myself with exposing you, which I consider a duty I owe to society. This is a leniency, sir, which I hope you will remember."

When Mr. Pickwick arrived at this point, Job Trotter, with facetious gravity, applied his hand to his ear, as if desirous not to lose a syllable he uttered.

"And I have only to add, sir," said Mr. Pickwick, now thoroughly angry, "that I consider you a rascal, and a—a ruffian—and—and worse than any man I ever saw, or heard of, except that pious and sanctified vagabond in the mulberry livery."

"Ha! ha!" said Jingle, "good fellow, Pickwick—fine heart—stout old boy—but must *not* be passionate—bad thing, very—bye-bye—see you again some day—keep up your spirits—now, Job—trot!"

With these words, Mr. Jingle stuck on his hat in the old fashion, and strode out of the room. Job Trotter paused, looked round, smiled, and then with a bow of mock solemnity to Mr. Pickwick, and a wink to Mr. Welller, the audacious slyness of which baffles all description, followed the footsteps of his hopeful master.

"Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, as Mr. Weller was following.

"Sir."



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"Stay here."

Mr. Weller seemed uncertain.

"Stay here," repeated Mr. Pickwick.

"Mayn't I polish that 'ere Job off, in the front garden?" said Mr. Weller.

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Mayn't I kick him out o' the gate, sir?" said Mr. Weller.

"Not on any account," replied his master.

For the first time since his engagement Mr. Weller looked, for a moment, discontented and unhappy. But his countenance immediately cleared up; for the wily Mr. Muzzle, by concealing himself behind the street door, and rushing violently out at the right instant contrived with great dexterity to overturn both Mr. Jingle and his attendant, down the flight of steps, into the American aloe tubs that stood beneath.

## OF POETRY

BY SHELLEY

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the center and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which all spring, and that which adorns all;



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and that which, if blighted, denies the fruit and the seed, and withholds from the barren world the nourishment and the succession of the scions of the tree of life. It is the perfect and consummate surface and bloom of all things; it is as the odor and the color of the rose to the texture of the elements which compose it, as the form and splendor of unfaded beauty to the secrets of anatomy and corruption. What were virtue, love, patriotism, friendship; what were the scenery of this beautiful universe which we inhabit; what were our consolations on this side of the grave, and what were our aspirations beyond it, if poetry did not ascend to bring light and fire from those eternal regions where the owl-winged faculty of calculation dare not ever soar? Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man can not say, "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even can not say it, for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the color of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our nature are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. Could this influence be durable in its original purity and force, it is impossible to predict the greatness of the results; but when composition begins,



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inspiration is already on the decline, and the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original conceptions of the poet. I appeal to the greatest poets of the present day, whether it is not an error to assert that the finest passages of poetry are produced by labor and study. The toil and the delay recommended by critics can be justly interpreted to mean no more than a careful observation of the inspired moments, and an artificial connection of the spaces between their suggestions, by the intertexture of conventional expressions; a necessity only imposed by the limitedness of the poetical faculty itself; for Milton conceived the "Paradise Lost" as a whole before he executed it in portions. We have his own authority also for the muse having "dictated" to him the "unpremeditated song." And let this be an answer to those who would allege the fifty-six various readings of the first line of the Orlando Furioso. Compositions so produced are to poetry what mosaic is to painting. The instinct and intuition of the poetical faculty is still more observable in the plastic and pictorial arts: a great statue or picture grows under the power of the artist as a child in the mother's womb; and the very mind which directs the hands in formation is incapable of accounting to itself for the origin, the gradations, or the media of the process.



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